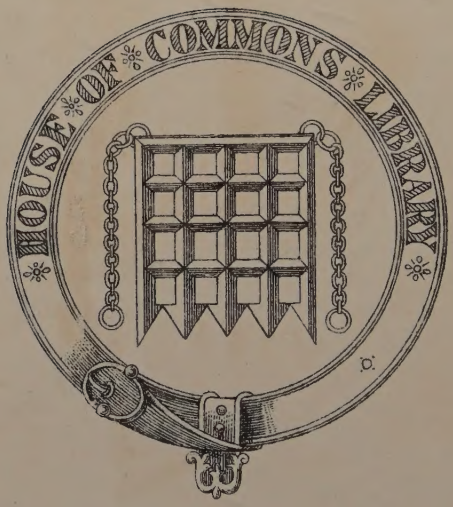
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Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

By George Unwin
Sometime Scholar of Lincoln College

Oxford
At the Clarendon Press
1904

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HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
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PREFACE

THIS book has grown up out of a piece of research which I planned as a student of Berlin in 1898, and commenced to carry out as a student of the London School of Economics in the following year. An article published in the *Economic Journal* for September 1900, under the title 'A Seventeenth-Century Trade Union,' which was the first outcome of this investigation, has, with the kind permission of the editors, been reproduced almost in full in Section 4 of Chapter VIII.

Setting out with the detailed examination of the records of a single London company, I was gradually led to include within the scope of my inquiry, first, the other industrial companies of London, then the similar organizations in other English centres of industry, and finally the parallel development in continental cities, and especially at Paris. In this way I came to entertain the idea of doing something, however tentative, to bridge over the gap which appeared to exist in industrial history between mediaeval England and the England of the eighteenth century.

The chapters on mediaeval industrial organization in Professor Ashley's *Introduction to Economic History and Theory* on the one hand, and on the other hand the *History of Trade Unionism* and *Industrial Democracy* of Mr. and Mrs. Webb, have supplied me not only with a starting-point, but with an invaluable and constantly renewed stimulus. I should not, however, have ventured to undertake the task, if it had not been for the inspiration and the guidance derived from the lectures and writings of Professor Gustav Schmoller of Berlin, and if I had not been able to avail myself very largely of the researches in German economic history of the school which Professor Schmoller may be said to have founded.

No one, whatever his special subject or period, who attempts to make a contribution to English economic history can avoid laying himself under obligations to the work of Dr. Cunningham. My own debt would have been much greater if I could have taken advantage of the enlarged edition of the later portion of the *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*—which, however, did not appear till my book was ready for the press. I have done my best by the addition of references to enable the reader to avail himself of this great storehouse of economic learning.

In the case of the French work to which that of Dr. Cunningham most nearly corresponds—the *Histoire des classes ouvrières et de l'industrie en France* of M. Levasseur —I have been somewhat more fortunate. More than forty years after the first appearance of what has since been the standard work on the subject, M. Levasseur is at present engaged on a revised edition embodying the results achieved by historical research in the interval. The first two volumes of this edition, which appeared in 1900 and 1901, furnish the student with an indispensable guide to the sources of French social history. Those sources are rapidly becoming accessible in printed form, and amongst them are many records of industrial organization, the most valuable of all for the purpose of comparison with English contemporary records being the edition by M. René de Lespinasse of the ordinances of the Parisian corporations—which forms part of a magnificent series of volumes, designed to illustrate the history of Paris in all its aspects.

Although London certainly has fallen behind Paris in this respect, the progress made of late in the publication of municipal records in England generally has been very marked. Many old cities and boroughs have taken the matter in hand for themselves, with excellent results; the Historical MSS. Commission have reported on the records of many others; and the local historian, thanks no doubt in some degree to the influence of Mrs. J. R. Green's *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, has begun to show far more appreciation than formerly of the value of local

records as material for social and economic history. Two books exemplifying this tendency which I have found especially helpful are Miss Harris's *Life in an Old English Town* and Canon Morris's *Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Reigns.*

With regard to the sources from which materials have been drawn, this book will be found to fall into two fairly distinct halves. The first of these is based almost entirely on the published histories, articles, and records of which a list will be found in Appendix C; whilst the materials for the second portion, which begins on p. 112, have been mainly derived from the manuscript sources indicated in Appendix B.

In this difference of material there is implied almost inevitably a difference of method. In the earlier chapters an attempt has been made to exhibit the transformation of the London craft organizations as part of a development which belongs to the general history of Western Europe, and this has involved an extensive use of the comparative method. It may perhaps be thought that too much stress has thus been laid upon the parallelism between English economic development and that of continental nations. This, however, has not been put forward as the final aspect of social history; although it certainly seems to deserve more attention than has been commonly bestowed upon it. At a later stage of inquiry it would, no doubt, be necessary to insist upon the element of differentiation due to the working of causes peculiar to each nationality.

If this task has not been undertaken in the later chapters, it is because an almost entire dependence upon manuscript material precludes any extensive application of the comparative method. In attempting to give a somewhat detailed account of the activity of the new type of industrial organization which displaced the craft gild, I have been obliged to confine myself, not merely to England, but to London, and even to certain selected industries of the metropolis. The court books of two Livery Companies, constituting between them a continuous weekly record of administrative activity for nearly three centuries, served

as a backbone to the investigation; whilst a large amount of supplementary material relating to these and to the other companies was found among the Domestic State Papers, in the MS. department of the British Museum, in the Privy Council Register, in the Repertories of the City of London or in the archives of the House of Lords. It would be impossible for an individual student with less than a lifetime at his disposal to exhaust the unpublished material to be derived from these sources. The Calendars of State Papers—especially those more recently issued—have enormously facilitated the task of the historian by enabling him to dispense, in the great majority of cases, with a reference to the original MS.; whilst the volumes issued by the Historical MSS. Commission, and Mr. Dasent's edition of the *Acts of the Privy Council*, are gradually rendering the same service even more completely. But, in spite of the excellent example set by lesser towns, there is, as far as I know, no immediate prospect of the Repertories of the City of London, which form perhaps the richest storehouse of material for the history of industrial regulation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, being made more accessible to the student. The records of the Livery Companies are a very uncertain quantity; but it is probable that of the seventy-odd surviving companies a third at least possess records of considerable value, whilst the published histories of individual companies which give any satisfaction to the economic historian can be easily reckoned on the fingers of one hand. One of the main purposes with which this book was written was, by attempting to indicate the place occupied by the Livery Companies in the course of industrial development, to enable those interested in their records to do fuller justice to their value as material for the economic history of England during a very important period.

I am encouraged to hope that this purpose will not entirely fail of fulfilment by the sympathetic readiness with which I have been assisted by the three companies, the Feltmakers, the Haberdashers, and the Clothworkers, whose records I had selected for special investigation. I am

especially grateful to Mr. Peachey, Clerk to the Feltmakers' Company, whose kindness did much to smooth the difficult path of a beginner; and to Sir Owen Roberts, who courteously placed at my disposal the exceptionally interesting records of the Clothworkers' Company. Mr. W. E. Carrington of Stockport has supplied me with some valuable documents relating to the history of feltmaking.

My thanks are also due to the Library Committee of the City Council for permission to make some extracts from the City Repertories; to Mr. J. R. Dasent of the Board of Education, and Mr. J. C. Ledlie of the Privy Council Office, for free access to the Privy Council Register; and to Mr. J. C. Tingey, Honorary Archivist of Norwich, and the Rev. W. Hudson his predecessor in that office, who did all in their power to assist my somewhat cursory examination of the admirably arranged records on the basis of which they are about to make an important contribution to the history of that famous city. In conclusion I wish to express my indebtedness to Mr. L. L. Price, Bursar of Oriel College, and to Mr. Joseph Owen, Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, who took the trouble to read some of the earlier chapters in manuscript, for much timely encouragement and helpful suggestion; and to Mr. J. C. Dore of Cardiff, and my wife, for valuable assistance in getting the book through the press.

CHELSEA,
May 7, 1904.

NOTE AS TO REFERENCES

The edition of M. Levasseur's *Histoire des classes ouvrières en France* referred to in this book is the greatly enlarged one just published of the first two volumes dealing with the period before the Revolution. The references to Dr. Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce* are taken from the third edition. The two divisions of the work, *Early and Middle Ages* and *Modern Times*, are referred to as i and ii respectively. The third edition of the latter portion is in two parts, but is paged as one volume. The *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirthschaft im Deutschen Reich*, and the *Staats- und socialwissenschaftliche Forschungen*, both edited by Professor Gustav Schmoller of Berlin, are referred to as Schmoller's *Jahrbuch* and Schmoller's *Forschungen*.

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INTRODUCTION

Industrial survivals at the present day

To the eye of the scientific observer, human society, as it lives and moves at the present day, embodies an endless variety of survivals from almost every age since the dawn of history; and nowhere is the past more closely intermingled with the present than in the complicated and world-wide ramifications of modern industry. As a concrete illustration of this truth it will suffice to take the case of any English town of average size—with a population of, say, between 50,000 and 100,000—and to enumerate the main industrial channels through which the primary wants of the inhabitants are supplied.

Home-production a survival from the village community

In the first place a part—though a much smaller part than formerly—of what is worn by the members of each household is produced by the domestic labours of the family circle. Home-knitted stockings, home-made underwear, and home-contrived children's garments, though not common in large cities, are still worn to some extent in provincial towns. Most working-class families do some home tailoring, and not a few, even in London, repair their own boots. With the natural progress of the division of labour, these domestic activities, along with others, such as baking, brewing, and preserving, tend to be replaced by the labours of the workshop and of the factory. The fragments that remain may be considered as survivals from the domestic economy of the primitive village community, in which every household supplied almost all its own wants, and the only professional craftsman was the smith[1]. When Dr. Johnson made his famous tour of the Hebrides with his faithful Boswell, he found this simple mode of life still prevailing in some of the western islands of Scotland; and the modern traveller who ventures his life amongst the Albanians describes them as employing no craftsman but the alien and wandering smith.

[1] K. Bücher, *Die Entstehung der Volkswirthschaft*, translated by S. M. Wickett, under the title *Industrial Evolution*, pp. 155–7. The later village community, survivals of which are still found in India, embraced often a variety of artisans, such as potters, shoemakers, barbers, who were not 'free craftsmen,' working for their own gain, but officials of the community. See H. Maine, *Village Community*, p. 125; B. H. Baden-Powell, *Indian Village Community*, pp. 16, 23.

The handicraft type of industry

The nearest source from which the labours of the household in our typical modern town can be supplemented or replaced is to be found in the small tradesman—the baker and the butcher, the working tailor and the cobbler of the immediate neighbourhood. The characteristics of this class are—that its members deal directly with the consumer; that they work with their own hands, though sometimes assisted by an apprentice or a journeyman; and that they possess a very limited amount of capital. Sometimes indeed they work upon material supplied by their customers. This used to be the case even with the baker, to whose oven the household sent its daily bread and its weekly joint. Nowadays it is no doubt more general for the small tradesman to furnish his own material, but the amount of his circulating capital is often restricted to a week's supply—a side of leather, a few sacks of flour, or a beast for slaughtering—which in some cases may be obtained on credit. It is to work carried on under these conditions—only removed by one degree from the simplicity of household production—that the name of *handicraft* has been applied[1]. And just as home-production is a survival from the period of the village community, so handicraft represents the industrial conditions of the later period when civilization took a step forward from the village to the town.

is a survival from the mediaeval town,

There had been very little division of labour in the village community. Nearly all its members had been engaged in directly supplying their own elementary wants, or in assisting to supply the similar wants of their lord. The town arose as a centre in which the surplus produce of many villages could be profitably disposed of by exchange. Trade thus became a settled occupation, and trade prepared the way for the establishment of the handicrafts, by furnishing capital for the support of the craftsmen, and by creating a regular market for their products. In the mediaeval town, therefore, it was possible for a great many bodies of craftsmen—the weavers, the tailors, the shoemakers, the butchers, the bakers, the carpenters, the masons, &c., to find a livelihood, each craft devoting itself to the supply of a single branch of those wants which the village household had attempted very imperfectly to satisfy by its own labours[2].

represented by the poor neighbourhood of today

In respect of their relations to a wider economic environment, there is of course the greatest possible difference between the position of the mediaeval craftsman and that

[1] Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, pp. 168–71, 188; G. Schmoller, *Grundrisse der allgemeinen Volkswirtschaftslehre*, i. 419 (1900).

[2] Cf. Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, p. 99.

of his modern representative, the working tailor or shoemaker of our back streets. The mediaeval craftsman was a pioneer engaged in opening up the virgin soil of industry; whilst the modern craftsman is a poor gleaner in a field which has been already swept by the machinery of larger systems of production. But in the more immediate conditions of his employment, in the smallness of the capital invested, and the directness of the relation between producer and consumer, the modern craftsmen preserves for us the features of the earliest stage of industrial development. If we wish to assist our imaginations to form a conception of a mediaeval town by a reference to existing facts, we must set aside the trading centre of the modern town, with its large shops, its railway station, post office, and public buildings, and take as our starting-point some poor neighbourhood in the town, inhabited by the working class. Such a neighbourhood has often an individuality and a name of its own. It has its parish church, its life-long residents, its centres of gossip, its familiar characters, its customs and traditions not shared by the rest of the town. These things supply the social setting to which the lingering element of handicraft in modern industry properly belongs.

The domestic or commission system

But the inhabitant of such a neighbourhood looks beyond its limits, not only for almost all the higher interests of his life, but also for the supply of the greater part of his material needs. If he wants a new suit of clothes, if his wife desires a new dress or new furniture for her parlour, these are generally obtained at the large shops in the centre of the town. Here we are brought into contact with a more advanced phase of industrial development. The tailor with the large shop and an extensive stock of materials, who supplies the suit of clothes, is not so much a craftsman as a trader. His business is to elicit an order. He probably sets a workman to measure the customer, and when the materials have been cut out he hands them over to be made up by one of a number of workmen, whom he keeps employed in their own homes. The advantage of this interposition of the trader between the producer and the consumer is that the producer obtains a larger market for his work, and the consumer a wider choice in the satisfaction of his wants. No very satisfactory name has been found for this method of employment. It has generally been called the *domestic system*, because the work is carried on in the home, but this does not sufficiently distinguish it from the *handicraft system*. Another proposal is to

call it the *commission system* [1], which applies well enough to cases like that already described, but is not so applicable to other cases where the 'small master,' instead of waiting for a commission, produces at his own risk articles of a type in common use, and then endeavours to dispose of them to a dealer. If, for instance, the inhabitant of our typical neighbourhood should decide to invest his savings in furniture rather than clothes, it is not improbable that the sideboard or the wardrobe, which is henceforth to adorn his house, will have been made in the domestic workshop of a Shoreditch cabinetmaker, sold to a dealer in Curtain Road, and sent by him to replenish the stock of the shopkeeper in our provincial town.

belongs to the period of national unification

The last illustration helps to explain the place of the domestic system as a stage in the historical development of industry. Just as the rise of the handicrafts is associated with the subordination of the village to the larger economic unity represented by the town, so the appearance of the domestic system was part of a later development by which the town was subordinated to the still larger economic unity of the nation at large [2]. The mediaeval town had aimed at being nearly as self-contained as the primitive household. There was, of course, division of labour between the town and the country round about it. The country people brought their foodstuffs, their wool and hides, to the town market, and were supplied in return with the various products of the town handicrafts. In addition to this, as the population of the town increased, there was further division of labour amongst its workers, leading to a multiplication of separate handicrafts. But of that division of labour between distant centres of industry, by virtue of which Sheffield makes cutlery for Northampton, Northampton makes boots for Burslem, and Burslem makes pottery for Sheffield, there was exceedingly little in mediaeval times. So free an interchange as now takes place implies the existence of many social and political conditions which have been of slow growth. But considered merely as a matter of industrial development, it was first rendered possible by the transition from the handicraft system to the domestic system. From the fifteenth century onwards, bodies of craftsmen in the various industrial centres were enabled, through the agency of the trading

[1] Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, p. 171. The word in the original is *Verlagssystem* ; cf. Schmoller, *Grundrisse*, i. p. 424.

[2] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, pp. 8, 42, 220 ; Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, pp. 83–149.

middleman, to find a market for their wares in distant parts of the country. With such a machinery of distribution at his command the producer did not need to remain within reach of the consumer. Secure of a national market industry was free to concentrate in the most favourable localities, and by this process the more important industries lost their local limitations, and acquired a national character, during the period between the Reformation and the Revolution. We may therefore regard the cases already cited from the tailoring and furniture trades as survivals exemplifying the type of industrial organization which predominated in the days of Shakespeare and Milton.

The factory system is the modern form of industry

But all the three sources of supply, so far enumerated, taken together probably fail to account for more than half the commodities regularly consumed by our typical working-class family. Their hats, and boots, and ready-made clothing, the sheets and blankets on their beds, the beds themselves, and a score of other things were made in factories by wage-earners organized in large numbers under the immediate direction of capitalist employers, and generally with the assistance of elaborate and expensive machinery[1]. This is so universally recognized as the normal method of modern industry that the instinctive tendency would probably be to overrate rather than underrate the proportion of wants which it supplies. The couple of centuries which have elapsed since England gave birth to the factory system have not sufficed, as our survey has shown, for the elimination of the earlier methods of production. In every manufacturing town, craftsmen, who preserve the industrial type of Chaucer's day, and small masters, whose status resembles that of Shakespeare's *Bottom the Weaver*, are to be found in considerable numbers side by side with factory workers of the modern type. It is not superiority of numbers but superiority of organization which gives the factory-worker the leadership of the working-classes.

The sweating system a surviving social problem

The survival of the handicraftsman is rendered a familiar fact to most people by the daily contact into which he is brought with the customers whose wants he supplies. But the case of the small master working for a middleman is not obtruded upon the public notice. Numbers of this class are hidden away in the unexplored regions of our great cities. They are exempt from the visits of the factory inspector, and most of them belong to no organization. Probably few of those who read the evidence given before

[1] Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, pp. 173–8.

the Lords' Committee on the sweating system had been aware how extensive and various were the industries still carried on in domestic workshops, and fewer still are likely to have realized that the evils then brought to light were the lingering traces of what constituted the great industrial problem of Tudor and Stuart times, just as the conflict between organized wage-earners and their employers constitutes the great industrial problem of to-day.

The domestic system in modern England

The great survey accomplished by Mr. Charles Booth and his assistants has not only shown that the 'domestic system,' i. e. the employment of workers in their homes or in larger domestic workshops under small masters, is the predominant method of employment in the East End of London, but has also supplied us with a vivid picture of the conditions under which the typical industries of this class, the tailoring and shoe-making of Whitechapel, the silk-weaving of Bethnal Green, and the cabinet-making of Shoreditch, are carried on [1]. More recently a careful German observer has enumerated a list of English industries in which the domestic system prevails, including the cutlery trade of Sheffield, the pottery and the chain and nail-making of the Black Country, the lace-making and hosiery of Nottingham, the straw-plaiting of Bedford, the glove industry of Worcester and Oxfordshire, the smallware trades of Birmingham and the silk-weaving of Macclesfield [2]. In some of these cases—at Nottingham and Sheffield, for instance—an arrangement is found which is half-way between the domestic workshop and the factory. The small master continues to undertake the work upon his own account, but he hires from a larger capitalist, not only the room in which his occupation is carried on, but also the power necessary to keep his wheel or his loom in motion.

and in continental countries

And if in England, the birthplace of the factory system, the amount of industry carried on under the older form of organization is still so considerable, the proportion is even greater throughout the rest of Europe. In the cotton and woollen manufactures, in which England remains unrivalled, the factory system has long been completely triumphant; whilst the handloom of the small master still lingers in many parts of France and Germany, and is much commoner in Eastern Europe [3]. Most of the domestic industries spoken

[1] C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People of London*, vols. i, ii.

[2] W. Hasbach, *Zur Characteristik der englischen Industrie* in *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung* (ed. Schmoller), 1902, pp. 1032–52.

[3] E. Helm, *British Cotton Industry* in '*British Industries*,' edited by Professor Ashley, p. 88.

of as existing in England are to be found in the other countries of Europe, and most countries have industries of this kind peculiar to themselves. Such are, for example, the production of articles of fashion in Paris, of toys in the Black Forest, of watches in Switzerland, and of samovars in the Russian villages. The Russian village industries carried on in this way are most varied and extensive. Some twenty years ago it was estimated that the population so employed numbered seven and a half millions[1]. It must be remembered that in the brief history of Russian civilization that development of town life, which did so much to forward the social and political and economic progress of Western Europe, has no place. The production carried on by the village community for the satisfaction of its own wants has been directly converted, without passing through the handicraft stage, into a number of domestic industries, which are provided with a distant market by the enterprise and capital of the merchants in the trading centres[2].

It is here considered as a modification of handicraft

The scope of this book is confined to England as representative of West European civilization. Its purpose is to give some account of the rise of the domestic or commission system, not as springing out of the home-production of the village community, but as displacing the handicraft system of the town. The Craft Gild was the institution in which the handicraft system found its social embodiment. The transformation of the gild with which we are concerned is the process by which a social institution called into existence by one set of economic conditions, was gradually adapted and remodelled from within and from without to meet the requirements of another and more complex set of economic conditions arising out of the progress of civilization. The new type of organization which was the result of this transformation has left behind no name by which it can be clearly distinguished[3]. In England it was generally called a company, and the London Livery Companies, as they existed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, have supplied this book with most of its examples. But the term company does not distinguish the industrial organizations, with which this book is specially concerned, from the purely commercial companies of the same period

[1] Conrad, *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, article *Hausindustrie.*

[2] Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, p. 171.

[3] Schmoller's article *Recht und Verbände der Hausindustrie* in his *Jahrbuch*, vol. xv, gives the best account of similar French and German organizations.

engaged in home or foreign trade, or from the joint-stock companies of the present day.

The connexion between Gild and Trade Union is real,

In the absence of a distinctive name it is important to make our conception of the thing signified as clear as possible; and perhaps the best way to do this is to set out from the two kindred conceptions that have acquired distinctive names—the Handicraft Gild and the Trade Union. The uncritical attempts that have sometimes been made to bring these two widely different forms of industrial association into some sort of historic connexion have had a sound instinct behind them. However erratic they may have been in result [1], they have been animated by a dim recognition of the truth that a social institution needs to be explained by a reference to antecedents of its own kind. Economic conditions will not of themselves produce a trade union, nor religious convictions a church. Nor is it sufficient to say that those conditions or convictions taken together with the social nature of man are the causes of these institutions. Man is no doubt everywhere a social animal, but there is nothing in which the races of mankind and the separate branches of those races differ so much as in their aptitude for free association, and in the forms which that aptitude takes. It is a divergence not so much of religious convictions as of social characteristics, which makes the Christian Church such a different institution in Germany and in England, in Scotland and in South Africa. And social character of this kind must not be thought of as innate and as springing up spontaneously in each fresh generation. To a large extent it is transmitted through conscious imitation of the older generation by the younger, of the class which has already achieved organization by that which has not. There is no harm in calling this the influence of environment, as long as it is realized that mere environment cannot produce social progress without the co-operation of willing and congenial subjects. The maxim *omne vivum ex vivo*, 'no life without antecedent life,' which has recently been transferred from the sphere of biology to that of the higher life of the soul, is a truth that certainly holds good in the intermediate domain of that science which deals with the growth of the social mind. And if we cannot always detect the kindling process of living contact, it is our business as students of social science to arrange the kindred forms of social life as nearly as possible in the order of their natural succession.

[1] Cf. S. and B. Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, p. 11.

but must be traced through intermediate links

In this sense then the Gild is to be regarded—not indeed as the parent but—as the ancestor of the Trade Union, as it was also the ancestor of the modern Employers' Association, and of many other existing forms of social organization. To attempt to find an immediate connexion between the Gild and the Trade Union is like attempting to derive the English House of Commons from the Saxon Witanagemot. In the one case as in the other the two institutions were separated by centuries of development, and the earlier one was dead before the later one was born. In both cases a connexion undoubtedly exists which is real, significant and vital, but it needs to be traced through intermediate links. To supply the links in the first of these cases, and thus to bridge over—however tentatively—the chasm that separates mediaeval from modern industrial history, is the chief purpose of this book.

The differentiation of class due to division of labour

The Gild belongs to the earliest and simplest, the Trade Union to the latest and most complex, phase of industrial society. In what direction then, we may now ask, are we to look for the significance of this change from simplicity to complexity? It is to be found mainly in the constantly widening application of the principle which Adam Smith was content to describe as the Division of Labour[1]. Subsequent investigators have discovered so many aspects and varieties of this principle in its application, not only to economic but to physical and biological phenomena, that a whole vocabulary has been found necessary to express them. But the older and simpler term will serve our purpose here. Three different stages in the progress of division of labour have already been noticed. There was division of labour first between the town and the country round about it, then between different towns or other industrial centres belonging to one nation, and finally between the various nations of the world. In the first of these stages there is a town market or town economy, in the second a national market or national economy, and in the third a world market or world economy. And corresponding to the advance of division of labour between whole communities, there is similar advance of the same principle within the communities between the classes that compose them, leading to the adoption of a different industrial system at each stage. Thus the handicraft or gild system is associated with the *town economy*, the domestic or commission

[1] For an admirable discussion of the variety of meanings which have been covered by this phrase, the reader is referred to Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, pp. 282–314.

system with the *national economy*, and the factory system with the *world economy*. The general truth that underlies this development is expressed by Adam Smith in the title of his third chapter—'that the Division of Labour is limited by the extent of the market.' Robinson Crusoe had no market and therefore no division of labour. In the early village community there was not much division of labour beyond that which was effected between the members of each household. In the mediaeval town it might seem at first sight as if the principle had been carried out to quite a considerable extent, especially when the handicrafts come to be as many as fifty. But when we compare this number with the ten thousand occupations which, according to the census of 1895, are now carried on within the German Empire [1], we see that, in the mediaeval town, division of labour was still in its infancy.

The numerous functions combined by the gild craftsman

Let us look a little more closely at this process of class-formation which has been so astonishingly prolific in its results. On the small stage of the town economy the mediaeval master craftsman contrived to combine quite a number of parts, each of which demands, nowadays, the concentrated attention of several classes of specialists. In the first place he was a Workman, taking part with his own hands in the more important operations of his craft. Secondly, he was a Foreman, superintending the labours of his journeyman and his apprentice. Thirdly, he was the Employer, who undertook the responsibilities of production and supplied the capital for materials, food, and wages. Fourthly, he was a Merchant, in respect of the raw material of his trade. There were no wholesale firms upon whose constant supply and regular prices he could rely, as the modern manufacturer relies upon the leather-merchant or the timber-merchant. The hides or the timber had to be bargained for with the producer in the local market, and sometimes they had to be sought for through the neighbouring country districts. The master craftsman had therefore to devote some of his time and capital to the performance of the merchant's function, and he had to undertake some of the merchant's risks. And finally, his success in all the other parts was to no purpose if he could not, as a Shopkeeper, get his goods into the hands of the consumer [2].

Very gradually separated

It was possible to combine all these parts in a single

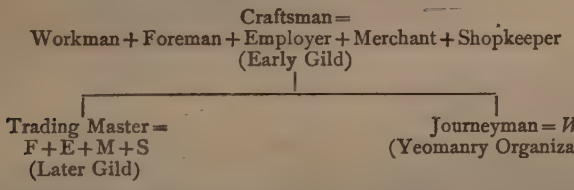
[1] Bücher, p. 324 n.

[2] Since writing the above I have found a similar analysis of the craftsman's functions in *Der moderne Kapitalismus* by W. Sombart (1902), i. p. 35. The same work contains an elaborate discussion of the subsequent distribution of those functions, see i. pp. 25–72.

person because each of them, except that of the workman, was still, owing to the very limited sphere of its operations, in a very rudimentary stage of development. As soon as the sphere began to widen, the necessity of a division of labour among separate classes makes itself increasingly felt. But the process was slow and gradual, and displayed an undulating kind of movement. The first allotment of parts amongst the newly formed classes was by no means final. As the development of industry and commerce proceeded there was frequent redistribution.

The first separation of the journeyman

The first separation arose from the fact that as the master craftsman found more scope for his activity as a foreman, an employer, a merchant, and a shopkeeper, he left the manual labour entirely to his journeymen and apprentices. Since the extension of these other functions involved the possession of more capital and more ability than are at the command of the average journeyman, only a favoured few could hope to become masters, and the rest came to form a separate body of workmen. As the interest of these journeymen was no longer represented by the master's gild, they sought to form an organization of their own, which in England was known as the Yeomanry. The development so far may be graphically represented thus :—



Rise of the small master

But this early separation of the workman's function was not permanent. As the volume of his trade increased, the further development of the master's activity as employer, merchant, and shopkeeper, left him no time to act as foreman to his workmen ; and since the journeyman was now a married man and a householder, it was possible to save much of the labour of superintendence by giving him piecework to do in his own home. In this way the journeyman was raised to the dignity of a small master and in addition to the part of workman he now undertook the part of foreman to journeymen and apprentices of his own, who expected in due course to be small masters themselves, and did not therefore form a separate class. The redistribution of functions may be represented thus :—

Merchant Employer = M + S + E

Small Master = F + W

Beginnings of industrial capitalism

The next stage of development was somewhat more complicated. In the first place some of the small masters acquired capital enough to supply themselves with material [1]. As long as this was only sufficient for a hand-to-mouth kind of existence they continued to be economically dependent on the trader who found them a market, but as their capital increased and they grew from small masters to large masters, they were able to deal with him on a more equal footing. The new capital thus built up was not employed primarily in trading, but in bringing together a greater number of workmen, belonging sometimes to different branches of a manufacture, and thus organizing industry upon a larger scale. In this way the function of the employer was passing out of the hands of the trading capitalist into those of the industrial capitalist. If the large master had covered the whole field of industry, the journeyman would now have been in the position of the modern wage-earner, restricted to the function of workman. But the class of small masters, whether employed by the large master or the trader, was still very numerous, and afforded a fairly easy alternative to the discontented or ambitious journeyman. When it is added that besides the trader, who had ceased to be an employer, there was also growing up a class of merchants who confined themselves to the larger operations of commerce, it will be seen that the range of classes at this point may be expressed roughly as follows:—

Large Merchant	Large and Small Shopkeepers	Merchant Employer	Large Master	Small Master	Journeyman
M	M+S	M+E	E+F	F+W	W

Emergence of the organized wage-earner

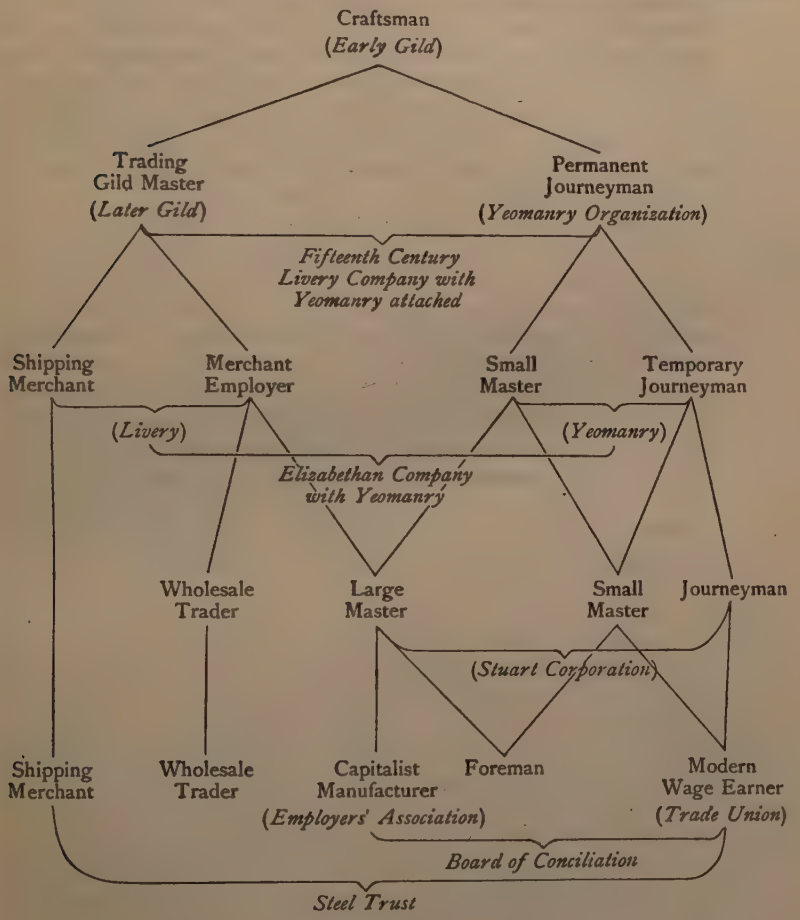
The process of class formation so far described covered a period of at least four centuries, i.e. from the end of the thirteenth to the end of the seventeenth century. It is unnecessary for the present purpose to follow the development further in detail. To indicate its broad results will be sufficient. The great inventions of the eighteenth century accelerated the movement already in progress towards the capitalization of industry, the final outcome of which was the modern factory system. In most of the leading industries the small master was driven to enter the wage-earning class, whilst the large master was transformed into the modern capitalist employer, who leaves the internal and technical affairs of his business largely to the management of subordinates in order that he may devote himself more fully to its relations with the outer business world. Now-

[1] In some cases this stage was reached earlier by a relative decline in the economic position of a portion of the master craftsmen.

adays the functions of employer, foreman, and workman belong to entirely separate classes; and indeed, to say merely this is very far from expressing the degree of specialization that has taken place in the internal economy of the great industrial concern[1].

In the accompanying diagram an attempt has been made, not only to trace on the lines already suggested the pedigree

An industrial pedigree



of the modern industrial classes, but also to indicate the successive forms of association in which, at different periods, one or more of the classes then existing were united.

But whilst we may rightly insist on the desirability of

Beginnings of joint-

[1] Cf. S. and B. Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, vol. ii, pp. 654 et seq.

stock industry

connecting the Trade Union with its sociological antecedents, it must be freely admitted that the story of the transformation of the gild is even more concerned with the organization of capital than it is with the organization of labour. Here too we shall have to supply the links between the extreme simplicity of mediaeval business conditions and the extreme complexity of the present day. Perhaps the most impressive characteristic of modern industry on its purely economic side is the enormous extent to which it is based on the use of collective capital. The joint-stock system in its present legal form is little more than a generation old, but its experimental beginnings are to be traced to the period with which we are concerned, and were indeed one of the numerous by-products of the transformation of the gild.

And of a national industrial policy

Finally, there is one other aspect of social experiment and transition which will have to be considered. It has been pointed out that the domestic system of industry is merely one of the aspects of the achievement of economic unity by the nation. The attempt of the early Stuarts to restrict the newly-born national energies within a regulative and protective framework constructed on the mercantilist principles which were then in the ascendant, and the rejection of the essential features of this policy by Parliament on behalf of the nation—these events have as central a significance for the industrial England of that period as the passing of the Factory Acts and the adoption of Free Trade have for the industrial England of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER I

THE AMALGAMATION OF THE CRAFTS

I

EDMUND BURKE in a passage of famous eloquence celebrates the wonderful power of self-adaptation which has given our political system so many centuries of unbroken continuity. Our conservatism, he declares, is due to a reverent imitation of the order of nature; 'wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole at one time is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but in a condition of unchangeable constancy moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation and progression.' However admirable for practical purposes may be the stability ensured by this method, there can be no doubt that it puts a serious difficulty in the way of the historical study of English institutions—to all of which, whether great or small, local or national, the dictum may be applied. A love of compromise which prevents the latent issue from taking visible shape, a disposition to ignore transition and to disguise change—these are political virtues of the first order; but they are apt to obscure the significance of history by concealing the working of those ideal forces by reference to which alone a progressive development becomes intelligible.

English dislike to abrupt constitutional change

It is this peculiarity of national character, together with the influence of a political environment in the creation of which that character has been a living factor, that makes it difficult to mark the historical limits for England of that set of tendencies which is generally known as the gild or handicraft system. On the continent the rule of the crafts (Zünfte) frequently corresponds to a definite period in the constitutional history of the towns, and the relation of this phase of economic development to the antecedent and subsequent phases is more or less sharply defined in terms of political conflict and revolution. In England the processes by which this body of tendencies rose to predominance and then gave way gradually to

obscures the rise and fall of the 'gild system'

other influences were comparatively gentle and noiseless. But the victory of one type of economic organization over another was none the less effectual because it was achieved in silence[1]. To use a geological metaphor, we may say that the successive layers of economic strata are the same in both cases, but that in one case the forces of political upheaval have produced a 'fault' which brings them more clearly to our observation.

The displacement of the Gild Merchant by the Craft Gild

The interest of the social history of the town in Western Europe lies chiefly in the gradual differentiation of the classes within it. The accession to political power of one class after another was the mainspring of constitutional change; and from a purely economic point of view this may be regarded as the replacement of one type of capitalist—one form of vested interest—by another. The aspirations of the unpropertied classes, though they may have added considerable weight at the moment of revolution to one of the competing claims of vested interest, were incapable as a rule of supplying by themselves a direction to the course of development. There have been, it is true, abundant examples, in nearly all periods of industrial history, of conflict between capital and labour, but these represent as a rule the merely temporary disturbances of economic equilibrium. The more persistent and effectual, though often silent struggle, by virtue of which economic progress has been maintained, has been the rivalry of one species of capitalist with another. Of such a rivalry the earliest instance is the conflict between the Gild Merchant and the rising power of the handicraft organizations[2]. It is a commonplace of economic history that the organization of trade usually precedes that of industry[3]. It is true that the existence of trade presupposes the exercise of industry; but the earliest objects of trade were the products of the agricultural or pastoral community, or were brought from distant centres of an earlier civilization. Thus as population increased and the industry of a town developed, it found itself in the presence of an already established trading interest[4], the organization of which was so closely connected with the earliest form of

[1] L. Brentano, introduction to 'English Gilds' in *Early English Text Society*, p. cxii; Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. 114–17.

[2] L. Brentano, p. cxxxvii. A recent summary of the views of the leading English, French, and German scholars on the subject is to be found in Professor Ashley's *Surveys Historic and Economic*, pp. 167–212.

[3] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. I, p. 77.

[4] Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce, Early and Middle Ages*, p. 219.

municipal constitution as to have made it possible to argue that constitution and the Gild Merchant were one and the same thing[1]. But although the exclusive privilege of buying and selling thus acquired by the original burgesses was in most cases the same in principle, the consequences that grew out of it differed very widely under divergent economic conditions. In the early centres of a flourishing foreign trade, as in many cities of Italy and Flanders, of Northern France and Germany, the monopoly supplied the basis for the growth of a class of wealthy merchants[2]. The development of local industry opened a new and valuable source of profit to this privileged class, and it naturally opposed with all its might the claim of the craftsman to trade on his own account. In England, on the other hand, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the members of the Gild Merchant were engaged for the most part in a purely local trade, and some of the strongest motives which elsewhere sharpened the class conflict between trader and craftsman were comparatively inoperative[3]. The extension of foreign trade, however, which in England accompanied instead of preceding the development of the handicraft organizations, gave a new life to the surviving forms of the older trading monopoly, and there is abundant evidence from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that it did not abandon its prerogatives without a struggle[4]. Indeed they were in some cases preserved in a modified form until the eighteenth century.

on the continent

and in England

The general tendency, however, both in England and on the continent, was for the single organization, with a monopoly of trade in general, to be replaced, whether by violent means or in a peaceable, gradual manner, by a number of separate organizations representing the several trades and handicrafts[5]. The significance of this change lies, as already suggested, in the advance in relative social importance of industrial or technical capital as compared with trading capital. If the element of labour assisted to procure the

corresponds to the displacement of trading capital by industrial capital

[1] J. Thompson, *An essay on municipal history*; controverted by Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 61.

[2] A. Doren, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Kaufmannsgilden des Mittelalters* (Schmoller's *Forschungen*, 1893).

[3] That conflicts between the trading interest and the craftsmen were not unknown at this time in England is shown by the examples to be cited later, p. 27.

[4] Mrs. Green, *Town Life*, ii. p. 202; cf. below, ch. iii; Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. pp. 127–34.

[5] Brentano, p. cx; Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. pp. 116–26; Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. p. 343.

political triumph of the crafts, it was the element of capital that gave permanence to the victory and that secured the greater part of its fruits. Of the truth of this, the cases of Ghent and Florence may serve as illustrations[1]. Each of these two great cities had become, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, a busy industrial centre; and the growing wealth of both was mainly derived from the manufacture, out of foreign materials, of textile fabrics which found a market throughout Europe and doubtless also in Asia. In Florence it was the textile trades that headed the list of the gilds which furnished a new framework of government at the end of the thirteenth century; and it was the weavers and fullers who thronged the streets of Ghent, who supplied the force by means of which the Van Arteveldes remoulded the constitutions of the Flemish towns, and struck out an independent commercial policy in defiance of their feudal suzerain. But the triumph of the industrial forces soon revealed, in each of these cases, a serious divergence of interest within their ranks. Throughout the fourteenth century the discontented master craftsmen and wage-earners of Florence kept up a struggle against the domination of the large employers, who along with the merchants monopolized the control of the gilds; and whose rule they succeeded in replacing for a few months by a more democratic organization in the revolution of 1378[2]. So too in Ghent, a few years after the recasting of the constitution in the interests of the cloth industry, the weavers and the fullers came to blows in the streets, because the latter wished to have the rate paid them by the piece for their labour increased, which the weavers, their employers, were unwilling to grant[3]. And speaking generally, it may be said that upon the attainment of a large share of political influence by the Craft Gilds in the fourteenth century, there followed, as a natural consequence, the separate organizations during the fifteenth century of the wage-earners who were excluded from association with their employers, the industrial capitalists. The cause of the craftsman, like most other causes, bore within itself in the hour of victory the seeds of its own decay[4].

Illustrations from cloth industry of Florence and of Ghent

[1] Cf. also the case of Aix-la-Chapelle, A. Thun, *Die Industrie am Niederrhein*, pp. 12–15 (Schmoller's *Forschungen*, 1879), and a number of others cited by W. Sombart, *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, p. 100.

[2] A. Doren, *Entwickelung und Organisation der Florentiner Zünfte im 13. u. 14. Jahrhundert* (Schmoller's *Forschungen*, 1897), pp. 59–83. Cf. H. Sidgwick, *The Development of European Polity*, p. 301.

[3] W. J. Ashley, *James and Philip van Artevelde*, p. 613.

[4] Brentano, pp. cxxxvii–cliii.

Transformation of the craft organization along three lines,

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century the history of industrial organization in Western Europe is mainly concerned with the process by which the economic independence of the mediaeval craftsmen gave way before the widening of the market, the increasing employment of capital, and the development of a business faculty which was the necessary correlative of these new conditions. There are three lines at least along which we can trace the adaptation of the older forms of association to the larger needs of the time. In the first place the growing power of capital might be revealed in the rise of one of a group of closely allied crafts to a position of predominance over the rest. In other cases the trading function came to be exercised by a select body within a single craft organization, and the members who remained craftsmen fell into a condition of dependence. And lastly, the organizations which had arisen to represent the purely trading class absorbed in many cases the organizations of the handicrafts over which they had acquired an economic control. It will be the purpose of this and the two succeeding chapters to give some account of these three lines of development. In the first case we shall find ourselves mainly occupied with the fourteenth, in the second case with the fifteenth, and in the third case with the sixteenth century.

(1) amalgamation of kindred crafts,

(2) differentiation of classes in a craft,

(3) absorption of crafts by trading organizations

II

Drawing together of London leather crafts

One of the best examples of a group of crafts so bound together as to favour the growth of economic dependence in their relation to one another, is to be found in the industries concerned in the preparation and manipulation of leather. An incident in the municipal regulation of the leather trades of London in 1378 presents this condition of things in its earliest stage. The officers of the cordwainers brought before the Mayor and Aldermen forty-seven tanned hides which had been exposed for sale by a certain tanner, and which they declared to be 'raw, false, and forfeitable.' The tanner claimed the right as a freeman of London to buy and sell all merchandise as he might please. He had bought the hides at the town of Rothewell to sell, not to the cordwainers, for whom they were not suitable, but to the other leather trades, and he requested to have his case tried by a jury of saddlers, pouchmakers, girdlers, bottlemakers, tanners, curriers, and cordwainers[1]. A jury

[1] Riley, *Memorials of London*, p. 420.

representing these various crafts of the workers in leather was accordingly appointed by the Mayor, and its decision was that the hides in their then state were of no service to any trade and should be forfeited.

Its significance for industrial development

The interest of this case lies in two points. On the one hand, it shows us the crafts still preserving in their relations with each other a large degree of independence and equality; whilst on the other hand it reveals the beginnings of the change which undermined the gild or handicraft system, by separating the trading function and the handicraft function from each other. The aim implied in the regulations of a typical craft was that each craftsman should have a like share in the trading function; and to secure this he must buy his material from the producer and sell the product to the consumer; but where there were a number of crafts representing a series of stages in production, this condition of autonomy was not likely to be long maintained. Along with the division of employments which had given rise to the separate crafts, there had proceeded a gradual widening of the area from which the raw materials were collected, and a similar widening of the area over which the finished products were distributed. Just as we find the London tanner importing hides from the Northern counties, so we find the traders of Bremen and of Lubeck exporting cargoes of shoes[1]; and in this way the craftsman at each end of the chain of production might naturally become a merchant. Moreover the enterprising master in each of the crafts would wish to secure, if occupied in the finishing processes, a supply of material, if engaged in the earlier stages of production, a market for his wares, and thus in either case he tended to become an employer of members of the other crafts. That this tendency was a general one is shown by an Act which had been passed in 1363, ordaining 'that handicraft people hold them every one to one mystery[2]'; and an Act of 1389, the first of a series of similar provisions, forbidding tanners to be shoemakers, or shoemakers to be tanners[3], proves that the tendency was by that time specially felt in the leather trades.

Parallel case of Paris leather crafts

Fuller evidence of the working of the same economic forces is afforded in the early history of the leather industries of Paris. In the fourteenth century the *Cinq Métiers*, as they were called, of the tanners, *baudroyeurs*, curriers,

[1] Hegel, *Städte und Gilden*, i. p. 407. M. Stieda, *Die Entstehung der Hausindustrie*, in *Schriften des Vereins für Social-Politik*, Bd. xxxix. p. 116.

[2] 37 Edward III, c. 5. [3] 13 Richard II, sect. i. c. 12.

cordwainers and sewers, were still united in an external way by subjection to the common control of an hereditary office, created by royal grant two centuries before. The reality of this control was passing away, and the crafts had each their separate officers and organizations[1]; but in 1345 they were still dealt with in a single set of ordinances; and throughout these ordinances there are abundant signs of the progress of the development already characterized. After provision has been made that all leather tanned in Paris and three neighbouring towns shall be duly inspected and marked, an ordinance follows dealing with the import of leather from a distance. A number of Parisian merchants, it appears, such as *baudroyeurs*, cordwainers, sewers and others, were in the habit of buying tanned leather outside the city at various fairs and markets, not only within the kingdom but also without it, and since such leather might be false and badly tanned, it was to be inspected and sealed by the officers of the tanners before it was sold or put to use[2]. Many of those engaged in the finishing processes had thus by an extension of their trading operations rendered themselves independent of the supply of the local tanner.

Separation of merchant and craftsmen

The next step towards the disintegration of the handicraft system, the employment of members of other crafts on the material thus provided, had also been taken in Paris. In the list of crafts within which a merchant class had arisen it will be noticed that the curriers are omitted; and it was the masters engaged in this intermediate process who most naturally fell into a state of dependence on the capital acquired by men of other crafts. A number of ordinances are devoted to the relations between the curriers and the 'merchants or cordwainers' who employed them. The latter were to supply not merely the leather, but also a sufficient quantity of grease and other materials used in the currying process[3]. If the currier discovered any defect in the leather, he was to return it to the merchant uncurried[4]; and a time was fixed varying from ten days to three weeks within which he was to deliver the work given out to him[5].

leads to breakdown of handicraft system

As far as the curriers of Paris were concerned the autonomy of the handicraft system, if it had ever in their case been realized, had broken down. Such a breakdown might have one or two results. On the one hand the craftsman

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers et corporations de la ville de Paris*, iii. p. 303.
[2] Ibid., p. 310, Art. 15.
[3] Ibid., p. 313, Art. 30.
[4] Ibid., p. 312, Art. 27.
[5] Ibid., p. 313, Art. 32.

might continue, as the currier did, to work in his own home, using in part his own capital, although dependent for constant employment on the larger capital of others. On the other hand he might become a mere wage-earner in the workshop of a capitalist master, who combined several crafts under one direction. The domestic system was the result of the adoption of the first of these alternatives. The second contained the germs of the factory system. Both forms of change were resisted by the craftsmen whose independence was threatened; but whilst the opposition to the second was backed by a strong public opinion embodied in persistent legislation[1], the first proved, in the case of the more important industries, to be an inevitable necessity of progress. This was probably due to the fact that it offered a practicable compromise with the still powerful handicraft traditions, and that whilst providing sufficient scope for the development of industry by larger applications of capital, it caused the least possible direct disturbance to existing organizations, and left the employed craftsman, to begin with, on a footing of something like constitutional equality with his employer.

The London saddlers dominate three auxiliary crafts

A situation of this kind is clearly set forth in an account of a dispute which occurred in 1327 between the saddlers on the one side, and the joiners, painters, and lorimers on the other, and which led to an armed conflict and the shedding of blood 'in Chepe and in the street of Criplegate.' The three last named trades were employed in different branches of saddlemaking, and they charged the saddlers with having 'ordained and established and thereunto among themselves made an oath that no one of the trades aforesaid shall be so daring as to sell any manner of merchandise that unto their own trade pertains either to freemen of the City or to other persons but only to themselves.' They also complained that when they went to ask for payment

[1] The English statutes relating to the leather industries afford the most striking illustration of this. The Act of 1389, forbidding tanners to be shoemakers or shoemakers tanners, was renewed in 1397 (21 Richard II, c. xvi), suspended in 1402 (4 Henry IV, c. xxxv), and again revived in 1423 (2 Henry VI, c. vii). In 1485 (1 Henry VII, c. v) tanners were forbidden to curry or curriers to tan; and in 1503–4 (19 Henry VII, c. xix) curriers and cordwainers were prohibited from interfering with each other's trade. Under Elizabeth and James I the limits of each trade were marked more precisely and its technical operations minutely regulated.

But these laws were found so irksome that Elizabeth empowered a favourite by letters patent to grant exemptions; and in 1616 the London Cordwainers and Curriers after much litigation had come to a mutual tacit agreement to ignore them.

for work already delivered, they were abused and maltreated by the saddlers. The saddlers on their side charged the three auxiliary trades and the gilders with having made a compact to strike work in common, by closing their stalls in case any member of one of the trades had a dispute with the saddlers; and also with insisting that such disputes should be referred to two of each trade. They further declare that the lorimers 'have made an ordinance among themselves, out of their own heads, that if any strange workman of the same trade shall come to the city he shall not be received on any terms until he shall have made oath to conceal their misdeeds'; and 'that the painters and joiners do set every point of their trade at a fixed price . . . by reason whereof they are making themselves kings of the land.' If we put these two accounts together we find ourselves in the presence of two opposing forces. There is the purely economic tendency, on the one hand, of the three or four auxiliary trades to become dependent on the saddlers, who had absorbed the trading function of the whole group; and on the other hand, there is the force of resistance which lies in the handicraft tradition of equality. The joiners, painters, and lorimers remind the Mayor and Aldermen 'that they have always been free of the City, in bearing their charge of tollages and other contributions as equals and commoners according to their power[1].' What the saddlers describe as an ordinance made out of their own heads they claim as a right belonging to every craft, that no strange workman of their trade ought to work among them, if he be not admitted and sworn 'among them and have not done that in the presence of the Mayor and Aldermen which unto the franchise of the City pertains[2].' The manner in which the dispute was finally settled by reference to a body of six saddlers and eight craftsmen representing the four auxiliary trades, shows that the latter, if united, were capable of holding their own[3]. The necessity for unity seems to have been recognized as the moral to be drawn from the dispute. Immediately after the account of the settlement there follows a petition of the four crafts of the joiners, painters, and the lorimers in copper and in iron, that all new comers of their trades might be admitted in the presence of the Mayor by eight men chosen to represent all the crafts[4]. It does not appear whether or not this petition was granted; but such amalgamations became subsequently, as we shall see, a common

[1] Riley, *Memorials*, p. 157.
[2] Ibid., p. 159.
[3] Ibid., p. 160.
[4] Ibid., p. 162.

feature of industrial organization. Although their original purpose was often, as in this case, the protection of the handicraft system, they are one of the chief symptoms of its decay, and they passed almost always in course of time into the hands of that trading interest the encroachments of which they were founded to resist.

Similar position achieved by Paris saddlers

In the case of the London saddlers we see the power of a trading craft over a group, held in check by the maintenance of a handicraft organization. The history of the Paris saddlers carries us a step further, and shows us the forms of organization in process of modification under the pressure of the same economic forces. There was the same division of employments in Paris as in London amongst the crafts employed in furnishing gear for horses[1], but the saddlers were not alone in developing the trading function. The lorimers, who possessed ordinances in 1320 forbidding members of their craft to go to work with or sell their wares to any but master lorimers[2], were their rivals in this respect till 1370, when the two crafts were amalgamated[3], apparently upon an equal footing. But this amalgamation had nothing in common with the one proposed by the four London crafts. It aimed at a consolidation, not of the handicraft, but of the trading interest. By uniting in one body the masters in each craft acquired the right to combine both branches under one direction; the amount of the entrance fees was doubled, and the masters claimed the exclusive right of buying to sell again. But the best evidence that the new organization was essentially a body of traders and employers, is to be found in the way in which it subsequently extended its control over other crafts. It acquired powers of search in 1379 over the trunkmakers[4], and in 1405 over the harnessmakers[5], without these crafts gaining any reciprocal rights. The amalgamation was dissolved in 1482[6], but was soon after re-established; and in 1678 it possessed exclusive rights over all branches of carriage-making[7].

The cutlery crafts controlled in London by the handle-makers

Another trade in regard to which London and Paris supply interesting parallels is that of the cutler. A deputation of London cutlers to the Mayor and Aldermen in 1408 explained that the making of knives was divided

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers et corporations de Paris*, iii. p. 437.
[2] Ibid., p. 447, Arts. 16, 18, 19.
[3] Ibid., pp. 450–1, Arts. 1, 10, 14.
[4] Ibid., p. 451, Arts. 1, 2.
[5] Ibid., pp. 453–4, Arts. 2, 3.
[6] Ibid., p. 456.
[7] Ibid., p. 462. Cf. Sombart, *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, i. p. 111, for evidences of a similar expansion in German saddlery at an early date.

between three different crafts, the bladesmiths who made the blade, the cutlers who fitted the handle, and the sheathers who supplied the sheath; but that it was the cutler who sold the completed article and upon whom the blame and scandal of bad workmanship fell. The making of sheaths, which it seems was combined by some of the cutlers with their own craft, was, it was complained, inadequately inspected; and the cutlers obtained authority on the strength of their twofold interest as traders and employers, to institute a scrutiny, along with two master sheathers, of all sheaths made in England or sold in London[1]. A few months later in the same year, the bladesmiths complained to the Mayor that country makers were in the habit of selling blades with trademarks resembling their own to the cutlers; and an arrangement was made under which the cutlers agreed not to take such wares, and the bladesmiths were bound not to increase the price of blades except by advice of the two masters of each craft jointly[2]. By virtue of these two ordinances the cutlers' organizations acquired an authority over the other crafts in the group, corresponding to the economic control secured by the absorption of the trading function. Seven years later, in 1415, it was raised by the grant of a royal charter to the rank of an incorporated company[3].

in Paris by the bladesmiths

In Paris, as in London, the cutlery trade was already in the fourteenth century supplied with blades of country manufacture. The capital required for this enterprise had been in part supplied by the mercers, who gave out blades to the handle-makers to be finished. But in 1367, the trading interest which had grown up within the industry itself obtained authority over it. The two handicrafts concerned—the cutlers (who in this case were the bladesmiths) and the handle-makers, who had been competing for the control of the trade, received joint rights of search; and as in the case of the London cutlers, a representative of the goldsmiths was authorized to share in the supervision of work done in the precious metals[4]. Two years later the two crafts are dealt with in a single set of ordinances which reveal the existence of two classes of masters. No handle-maker is to be a cutler nor to follow the trade of a blade-smith unless he buys the right to the craft as the bladesmiths do from the King's Marshal; but if the handle-makers wish

[1] Riley, *Memorials*, p. 567.
[2] Ibid., p. 568.
[3] Herbert *Livery Companies*, i. p. 105.
[4] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, ii. pp. 380–1.

to confine themselves to their own branch they need not buy the privilege[1]. In the ordinances of 1565 the cutlers appear as possessing full authority over both branches of the industry, the mercers are forbidden to act as employers[2], and the separate organization of the handle-makers has disappeared.

Amalgamation of the Ruhla cutlery crafts

It will be worth while in this instance to supplement the examples already given by one which takes us almost to the Eastern limit of Western Europe, and carries us forward into the eighteenth century. By that time the cutlery of Ruhla in Thüringen was carried to markets as distant as Stockholm and Riga[3]. In the seventeenth century the bladesmiths and the handle-makers were organized as separate handicrafts; but as in London, the handle-makers had monopolized the trading function and had become the employers of the bladesmiths. Moreover there were, as in Paris, a number of masters privileged to combine both crafts; and the mercers, in spite of prohibition, acted as merchant employers to the industry. In 1695 the friction between these various interests led to the intervention of the authorities, and to the amalgamation of the two organizations with equal rights to all members. This only served to give economic forces freer play. By the eighteenth century the working masters had become entirely dependent on a class of *entrepreneurs*, in which the privileged masters, the richer handle-makers, and the merchants had merged their interests.

III

The making of cloth at first a widespread home industry

In the earlier annals of industry, the textile crafts, and especially those engaged in the manufacture of woollen cloth, fill a more prominent place than either the metal workers or the workers in leather, and it is this group which supplies the most striking and detailed examples of the influence of economic development on the mutual relations of handicraft organizations. Before, however, we consider these examples, it is desirable to take into account certain special conditions which from the beginning have tended to divert the textile crafts to some extent out of

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, ii. p. 382, Art. 2.
[2] Ibid., pp. 387–8, Arts. 20, 27.
[3] E. Sax, *Die Hausindustrie in Thüringen*, ii. *Ruhla und das Eisenacher Oberland.* Cf., for similar cases in Germany, the account of the groups engaged in the making of swords and of knives at Solingen, M. Stieda, *Die Entstehung der Hausindustrie*, p. 121.

the common course of development. There was a considerable trade in cloth long before the industry was organized on a handicraft basis. Even at the present day, in many parts of Europe the spinning wheel and the hand-loom are kept busy in the peasant's cottage, not only for the supply of his own needs, but to help out the scanty profits of his land. Down to the fourteenth century this surplus produce of the home-worker was still very probably the trader's main source of supply[1]. Three or four centuries later the country districts had become once more the chief seat of the woollen industry, owing to the spread of the domestic system.

and subsequently organized on a handicraft basis

But this did not involve a recurrence to earlier methods. A great economic and technical advance had in the meantime been achieved[2]. From the middle of the twelfth century onwards the towns, many of which had acquired their first importance as cloth markets, began to be centres of the industry. Gradually the processes of the manufacture were specialized, and as each was appropriated by a separate body of trained workmen, there grew up side by side the several handicrafts of the weaver, the fuller, the bureller, the shearman or finisher, and the dyer. The drawing together of these crafts, owing to the efforts of industrial capital to fit them into the framework of a larger system of manufacture, was analogous to the process already described in the case of other groups.

But the earlier development of trade in cloth,

But the passage of the clothing industry through the handicraft phase was effected on a background of large survivals from earlier conditions peculiar to itself.

On the one hand it was in many cases only after a long struggle with the unorganized home-workers, whether in town or country, that the weaver's craft could succeed in imposing its authority on the industry; and in this way the establishment of the weaver's full status as a craftsman was retarded. On the other hand the extent of the trade that had grown up under earlier conditions made capital an important factor from the outset. The handicraft weaver was seldom employed in directly supplying a merely local demand. He was often indeed prohibited, in the interests of the local trade monopoly, from directly supplying any demand[3]. But in seeking to overthrow that monopoly his

[1] Cf. above, p. 6. [2] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, p. 443.

[3] For English cases see *Liber Custumarum*, pp. 130–1, with regard to Winchester, Beverly, Marlborough and Oxford; *Placitorum Abbreviatio*, p. 65, with regard to Lincoln; and Thompson, *History of Leicester*, p. 84; also W. J. Ashley, *English Woollen Industry*, p. 20, and Gross,

ambition, or rather the necessity of his situation, was that he should dispose of his wares at a more or less distant market.

prevented the industry from assuming a completely handicraft character

Thus it happened that the rise of a class of trading masters within the industry, instead of following upon the struggle which secured the handicraft status of the working master, went on simultaneously with it; the cohesion of the two divergent classes being secured by a common opposition to the local trading monopoly and to the rivalry of the country industry. The 'handicraft system' can therefore be said to have been a stage in the development of the textile crafts only in a modified sense. Like the other town industries, generally indeed in advance of them, they formed organizations in defence of their vested interests, which established and maintained for the workman the dignity and privileges of a handicraft. But the type of working and trading master independent of external capital, to which the phrase 'handicraft system' more properly applies, was probably at no period common in the various branches of the woollen industry. The members of these crafts were, as a rule, either employed on materials given out to them by others, or if they succeeded in trading on their own account, they went beyond the limits of the local market and were apt at the same time to become employers of other masters in their own and other crafts[1].

The London weavers organized as a handicraft

The progress of this twofold development is clearly indicated by the position of the clothing crafts in London and their relation to each other at the beginning of the fourteenth century[2]. There were by that time separate organizations representing the burellers (burlers?)[3], the weavers, and the fullers and dyers, besides a body of cutters or tailors who sold cloth to the public. The weavers (concerning whom we have most information) were in possession of the full privileges of a handicraft. Their ordinances, confirmed in 1300 but claiming to be derived from a much earlier period, gave them authority to enforce membership

Gild Merchant, i. 108. For continental cases see Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, Kap. II; and Ashley, *James and Philip van Artevelde*, p. 18. Dr. Cunningham, however, accounts for the disabilities of the weavers in English towns by supposing them to have been aliens; see Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. 189, also Appendix E. p. 635.

[1] A. Thun, *Die Industrie am Niederrhein und ihre Arbeiter*, p. 7, in Schmoller's *Forschungen*, 1879. E. Gothein, *Wirthschaftsgeschichte des Schwarzwaldes*, i. pp. 458, 519, 522.

[2] *Liber Custumarum*, pp. 121, 544.

[3] 'Burling' is the first of the finishing processes after weaving; see Ure, *Philosophy of Manufactures*, p. 187.

on all exercising the industry, to insist on a seven years' apprenticeship and to have regular jurisdiction, under the oversight of the Mayor, in all matters pertaining to their craft. A little later we find them charged with abusing their monopoly as a craft by limitation of their numbers and restricting their output, and with conspiring together in a church to increase their piecework rate[1]. The language in which these charges are couched is such as would naturally be used of a body of small master craftsmen, mainly concerned to enhance the value of their labour.

but include a number of larger employers.

But there are not wanting signs of the existence of a class of larger employers. It is evident that whilst many of the weavers worked by the piece for the public or for members of other crafts, there were some who bought materials and sold cloth, in the manufacture of which they found work for fullers and dyers. As we hear of looms being impounded by the gild for theft, it is likely that this latter class of master-weavers also gave out yarn to poorer members of the craft; especially as a prohibition which had previously existed against the hiring out of looms to other weavers was removed by the ordinances of 1300.

The burellers also give out work to the weavers

Moreover it seems almost certain, from the tenor of those ordinances and the circumstances under which they were framed, that a number of the burellers gave out work to the weavers. The relations between the two crafts had long been fixed by mutual agreement under the supervision of Mayor and Aldermen, but in 1300 the burellers complained that the weavers had infringed several articles of this arrangement and had made new ordinances 'in prejudice of all the commonalty of London and of the mystery of the burellers.' The weavers admitted that they had offended in some points, and asked that new articles might be drawn up by consent of both mysteries. The alterations thus made in the regulations of the weavers at the instance of the burellers were in every case in the direction of giving greater freedom to the employer, and of removing arbitrary restrictions to output. In view of this fact, the further provision, that in case of disputes between a bureller and a weaver there shall not as formerly be a general stoppage of work till amends are made, must be taken as strengthening the hypothesis that the weavers were largely employed by some of the burellers who had thus become cloth manufacturers[2]. This conclusion receives additional confirmation when we find about the same period two burellers and two tailors appointed to

[1] *Liber Custumarum*, p. 416.

[2] Ibid., pp. 121, 544.

sit on a jury with two weavers and two representatives of the dyers and fullers, to determine a question as to the proper fulling of cloth; and the decision that no weaver, fuller, or dyer may give out cloth which he is making for an employer to a fulling mill, whilst the owner of the cloth is permitted to do so, suggests the probability that the burellers and the tailors were among the owners referred to [1].

and are empowered to employ weavers in their own houses

But whatever may have been the condition of things at an earlier period, the records of a dispute between the burellers and the weavers in 1335 leave no doubt as to the relation of the two crafts at that date [2]. The weavers complained to the Mayor and Aldermen that the burellers were exercising the trade of weaving in their houses without being qualified by membership of the craft. The burellers boldly claimed the right as freemen of the city to carry on any trade or mystery; but added that the weaving was actually done by members of the weavers' craft in their employment. The weavers' attempt to establish their sole right to their craft was so little countenanced by the city authorities, that they did not venture to appear on the day appointed; and judgement was given to the effect that it should be henceforward lawful for all freemen to set up looms in their hostels and elsewhere, and to weave cloth and sell it at will, so long as the King received his yearly farm.

The London drapers may have arisen out of the burellers

The position thus won by the burellers corresponds exactly to that attained in 1357 by the woolbeaters of Strasburg, whose case will be dealt with later on. The Strasburg craft produced a class of employers who gradually acquired control of the cloth trade, so that the name belonging to it as a branch of the manufacture was exchanged for that of *Tucher* or Draper. It is not improbable that the same explanation may be applied to the disappearance of the burellers from the list of the crafts after the fourteenth century. That the ranks of the Drapers' Company were at any rate largely supplied from the burellers is an almost irresistible inference from the fact that the company's charter, by which it acquired in 1364 the sole right of making cloth, omits all reference to the burellers, whilst the three other crafts connected with the cloth manufacture are expressly excluded from its privileges. The preamble to the charter declares 'that dyers, weavers and fullers who

[1] *Liber Custumarum*, pp. 128, 551.

[2] *Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London*, E. pp. 291–6; and D. p. 113 n.; cf. the position of the Burellers at Winchester. Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. 189.

used to follow their own crafts had become makers of cloth and refused to work on the cloth of others except at excessive prices, and committed other frauds and forestalled cloth and sold it to drapers, so that it was twice sold before coming to common sale[1].' Whatever may have been the position of the burellers, this statement illustrates with sufficient clearness the competition among a group of closely allied crafts to secure the trading and employing function, and so to acquire predominance over the rest. The movement had taken definite shape by the end of the fourteenth century; and by the middle of the sixteenth century, it had come to prevail throughout the country, and in other industries besides that of cloth-making.

In Paris the weavers assume the leadership,

The course of development which, in the case of the London cloth manufacture, we are enabled to infer, may be traced with considerable detail in the case of Paris. In that city the definite organization of a separate class of drapers, which took place (1362) a couple of years before the charter was granted to the London drapers[2], had been preceded by at least a century of rivalry between the weavers, the fullers, and the dyers. Each of these crafts came ultimately to contain a number of cloth manufacturers who found employment for members of the other crafts; but it was the weavers who from the first took the lead in this respect. In an ordinance of 1270 there is a clear distinction made between the weavers who give out work, and the small master-weavers who are employed by them; the latter being forbidden to accept payment in materials from the former[3]. The famous industrial code, compiled a few years earlier than this by Etienne Boileau, Provost of Paris, shows that the richer weavers not only travelled to the fairs of Champagne to sell their wares, but that they employed dyers and fullers, as well as smaller masters of their own craft. An article in the weavers' ordinances forbids the members of any of the three crafts to combine for the purpose of preventing those who have occasion to employ them from getting the work done as cheaply as possible[4].

[1] *Livery Companies Commission*, ii. p. 170.
[2] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 145.
[3] Ibid., p. 141, Art. 13.
[4] Lespinasse, *Le Livre des Métiers d'Etienne Boileau*, p. 98:—
'XXXV. Nus Toissarens ne nus Tainturiers ne nus Foulons ne doivent metre fueur en leur mestiers par nule aliance par la quele cil qui afere auront de leur mestier ne puissent avoir de leur mestier pour si petit pris come il porront.
XXXVI. Nus Toisserans qui voist es foires de Champagne ne doit

but the other clothing crafts also produce a class of traders

Looking at these facts alone, we might conclude that the merchant employers amongst the weavers had acquired full control over all branches of the industry; but the truth is that the independence of the several handicrafts, so far from being lost, can hardly be said to have been, as yet, fully developed. The weavers indeed maintained the lead which they had assumed. It was out of their body that the drapers' organizations arose in 1362; and a search of the whole industry, instituted in 1407, was appointed to be carried out by three drapers, one fuller, one shearman, and one dyer[1]. But the fullers and the dyers succeeded in preserving, and even extending, their respective spheres of independent authority, and whilst their organizations, along with that of the shearmen formed in 1384, continued to defend their privileges as handicrafts, they each produced within themselves a separate class of trading employers[2].

Struggle of fullers for independence

Many details are recorded of the struggle of the fullers against the domination of the weavers. The fullers during the last quarter of the thirteenth century, resisted the dictation of their employers as to the methods of their work[3] and remuneration[4]: they insisted on their authority to search for and penalize defective cloth[5]; they refused to be restricted to the work given out by the weavers[6]; and in 1407 the ordinances of the drapers recognized the right of the fullers to sell cloth of their own make, in a hall set apart for the working members of the various crafts[7]. At a still later period the ordinances of the fullers (1443-67) refer to the employment by them of combers and carders of wool and of weavers, the latter alone being liable to inspection by the officers of the weavers' organization[8].

The growing predominance of the weavers' capital

The contest between the weavers[9] and the dyers possesses a peculiar interest because it illustrates in a striking manner the development side by side of the larger capitalist modes

vendre drap de S. Denis ne de Laigni ne d'ailleurs, mellé avec les draps de Paris.'

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 159, Art. 28.

[2] Ibid., p. 98, Art. 1; p. 108, Art. 14; p. 123, Arts. 17-23; p. 125, Art. 30.

[3] *Documents inédits sur l'histoire de France*, *Les Olim*, ii. p. 436 (A.D. 1299).

[4] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 97 (A.D. 1293).

[5] *Les Olim*, i. p. 845 (A.D. 1279).

[6] Ibid., ii. p. 81 (A.D. 1276).

[7] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 157, Art. 11.

[8] Ibid., p. 100, Art. 21; p. 103, Arts. 4, 5.

[9] Lespinasse, *Le Livre des Métiers*, p. 95, Art. xix.

of production and of the handicraft principle, and shows how they acquired definite forms in a growing opposition to each other. At first it seemed as if the dyeing industry were about to fall completely under the control of the weavers. The latter had always possessed the right to dye their cloth with any colouring matter but woad; and the Queen Regent, Blanche, had granted them the further privilege of using this process also in two selected workshops. The first ordinances of the dyers in 1268 take the form of a protest against this encroachment, which is declared to be 'against God, against right, and against reason, and especially and expressly against the king and against his righteousness.' If the weavers may follow the dyers' trade, say the aggrieved craftsmen, why should not the dyers follow the weavers', and it is pointed out that if the king will permit this mode of retaliation he will derive a benefit in his customs from the increased production of cloth[1]. This was not a mere rhetorical suggestion on the part of the dyers. A few years later some of them had set up in their houses various kinds of looms, which the weavers declared none ought to possess but themselves, and on this account the latter refused to supply the dyers with any cloth. After an inquiry into the practice prevalent in other 'good towns where drapery was made,' the king ordered that neither craft should meddle with the calling of the other[2].

leads the dyers to consolidate themselves as a handicraft

This decision merely put a stop to the combination of two crafts in one establishment, and did not interfere with the giving out of work to members of other crafts. As therefore the preponderance of their capital made the weavers the more natural employers, the dyers' best defence of their position was to strengthen their status as a handicraft. The masters met, and bound themselves by oath not to take apprentices in the future for less than five years, although three years had previously been regarded as sufficient[3]. The employing weavers complained that the effect of this limitation in the supply of labour was to impair the quality of the work and increase the price of it, and they began to send their cloth out of Paris to be dyed. Finally an agreement was arrived at through the intervention of the Prévost, by which the weavers

[1] Lespinasse, *Le Livre des Métiers*, p. 112, Art. 6.
[2] *Documents inédits, Les Olim*, ii. (A.D. 1279) and Depping, *Registre des métiers*, p. 401.
[3] Depping, *Registre*, p. 402 (A.D. 1287).

were bound to have their dyeing done within Paris, while the dyers engaged to do good work at the old prices[1].

The differentiation into separate crafts

Many records of similar disputes in other French towns illustrate the general tendency within the cloth manufacture towards differentiation into separately organized handicrafts[2]. Some little insight is also afforded by the same class of cases into the opposite tendency, by which the process of separation was in part counteracted in the interests of a larger co-ordination of industrial forces. It was the insistence upon apprenticeship that supplied the basis for the system of separate and independent handicrafts, and as long as a five or seven years' technical training was a necessary condition in each case, it was not likely that many would qualify themselves for the mastership in two or more crafts[3]. From the first, however, the sons of a master, and sometimes even his brothers and nephews, were admitted to the freedom of a craft without fulfilling the conditions demanded of others; and the right to exercise a trade came to be regarded as transmitted by inheritance or 'patrimony.' In this way it became possible for the son to combine the craft which he had inherited with another which he had acquired by apprenticeship. At the time when the weavers and the dyers of Paris were definitely separated, a certain Michael, who had combined his father's trade of dyeing with the weaving to which he had been duly apprenticed, being obliged to choose between these two crafts, decided for the former; and in spite of the protests of the dyers, who declared that a three years' apprenticeship was essential, and that Michael had been a weaver all his life, he was allowed to retain it[4].

is balanced by devices for combining two crafts in one person:

case in Provins, 1305

This incident helps to explain the larger significance of disputes which might otherwise seem to be due to the petty jealousies of the crafts. Amongst other matters, for example, that provoked a long controversy between

[1] Depping, *Registre*, p. 403 (A.D. 1291).

[2] For cases at S. Denis, Provins, Troyes, Amiens, and Nanteuil see Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières en France*, 1ère sér., vol. i. p. 272. For the clothing crafts of Douai, see Fagniez, *Documents relatifs à l'histoire de l'industrie et du commerce en France*, i. pp. 200 et seq.

[3] Lespinasse, *Le Livre des Métiers*, Introduction, p. 110, also p. 93:—

'IV. Chascum fils de mestre Toissarand de lange (weaver of cloth) ... peut avoir 11 mestiers larges et 1 estroit en la meson son pere, se il sait faire le mestier de sa main; ne ne sont pas tenu de paier gueit ne nule autre redevance, ne d'achater le mestier du Roy.'

The same right is accorded to one brother and one nephew.

[4] *Les Olim*, ii. p. 95 (A.D. 1271).

the various branches of the cloth manufacture at Provins in 1305, was the question whether each craft should accept as apprentices the sons of members of the other crafts. When the dispute was ultimately referred to the royal authority, the decision was in favour of abolishing the restriction on both sides; but it was added that if the weavers were unwilling to take the sons of wool-workers and of fullers, the two latter crafts should not be obliged to teach the sons of the weavers [1].

Progress of this method of integration at Rouen, 1378

We can best measure the progress made during the fourteenth century in the direction of drawing the various clothing crafts together, by comparing the beginnings of this tendency already indicated with several regulations laid down by royal authority for the cloth manufacture of Rouen in 1378, which provide that 'No draper, washer, or master weaver may have more than one apprentice; and the apprentice must serve three years to have the freedom of weaving; and similarly to have the freedom of washing, fulling and shearing, he must serve three years to such a master as is able to teach him the craft, and he may have the freedom of the said crafts; and if the apprentice wishes only to have the craft of washing he must serve two years; and to have the fuller's craft for one year.' It appears from this that the freedom of all the clothing crafts could be acquired by an apprenticeship of six years; and in fact the ordinances proceed to give permission to the individual capitalists to combine them all under one direction. 'The weavers may have a workshop (*establie*) or workshops, in which to get their cloths finished by piece-work or day-work as they may think fit; and similarly the washers and fullers may have one or more looms to weave their cloth in their houses by piecework or by the day [2].'

and on the continent generally

The records of many large centres of the cloth manufacture in Italy [3], in Switzerland, and along the Rhine [4], in France and Flanders [5], in Prussia and Silesia [6], supply abundant evidence that a concentration of the industry leading to the economic subordination of one or more

[1] *Les Olim*, ii. p. 476; Fagniez, *Documents*, ii. No. 5.
[2] *Ordonnances des roys de France de la troisième race*, vi. pp. 366–7.
[3] A. Doren, *Entwickelung der Florentiner Zünfte*, p. 88.
[4] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, p. 421; E. Gothein, *Wirthsgeschichte des Schwarzwaldes*, pp. 533–40.
[5] *Ordonnances des roys de France de la troisième race*, ii. p. 396; iii. p. 410, 510; vi. pp. 95, 196, 281, 364; A. Doren, *Kaufmannsgild* (Schmoller's *Forschungen*) p. 64; Ashley, *Philip and James van Artevelde*, p. 163.
[6] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, pp. 437–44.

crafts to another, which had appropriated the trading function, had become a general tendency by the end of the fourteenth century. But the best example that can be adduced to supplement those already given is the case of Strasburg, which has been made the subject of an exhaustive scientific inquiry by one of the greatest authorities on German industrial history. At Strasburg, as in many other German and French towns, it was the craft of wool-beaters, i.e. those who prepared the material for the weavers, which took the lead in organizing the manufacture. A class of merchant employers, known as *Tucher* or clothier, arose in this craft, who monopolized the direction of the organization, and drew an increasingly sharp distinction between themselves and the working members, who were forbidden, in 1381, to manufacture on their own account[1]. Over the weavers' craft the Tuchers extended their control in a more gradual manner. In 1357, by permission of the town council, they set up looms in their houses, and invited weavers out of the neighbouring districts to come to them for employment. Before the end of the century they had more journeymen weavers working for them than were employed by members of the weaver's craft. At the same time the weavers who continued to carry on a trade in cloth were denied the right of electing an official agent (*Unterkäufer*) of their own, and were obliged to have recourse to the officers appointed by the clothiers, in the use of whose dyer they were also allowed a share[2]. The ordinances of the fifteenth century show that the weavers were falling more and more into the position of the clothiers' employés; and in 1474, they were prohibited from selling cloth altogether. This prohibition was relaxed in 1481 in favour of the few well-to-do trading weavers on payment of a fine to the clothiers, and four years after this the whole development received its consummation by the amalgamation of the two organizations into one political body, which in the sixteenth century exercised control over all the crafts engaged in the manufacture of cloth[3]. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the weavers were affected in a merely negative fashion by this development. They had lost, it is true, their independence as an organization and their share of the trading function, but in the course of the struggle they had gained consolidation as a body of trained craftsmen, as

detailed illustration from Strasburg

[1] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, p. 419. [2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., pp. 500–2.

distinguished from the casual home-workers who had still done most of the weaving in the first half of the fourteenth century. This is even truer of the other crafts—the fullers, shearmen, and dyers, which also became subordinated to the clothiers' organization, but whose industry did not, like that of the weavers, tend to return into the country districts in the sixteenth century.

IV

Amalgamations due to the ascendancy of one craft in a group

It is not to be inferred from this enumeration of French and German parallels, that the development of industry in England and on the continent was identical in all its details. This is very far from being the case; but the numerous differences, which a careful comparison would undoubtedly exhibit, would serve only to emphasize the fundamental similarity which is our sole concern in the present investigation. Given the existence of the handicraft forms of organization with the influences of industrial progress at work upon them, and the process, of which so many examples have been adduced, seems to follow as an inevitable result:—the struggle amongst a group of allied crafts for predominance and the formation of amalgamations by which one acquires an ascendancy over the others.

to be distinguished from those due to the predominance of the outside trader

But this phenomenon, however widespread, only presents one aspect of a many-sided development, and will not of itself supply a complete and satisfactory clue to the evolution of industrial organization. As time goes on it is found blended with, and to some extent obscured by, other contributing causes, which will have to be separately considered in the following chapters. The chief of these was the influence of the outside trader. Instead of the necessary capital and business capacity being supplied by the members of one of a group of crafts to the others, it was often furnished to the craftsmen by the members of a purely trading organization into which the crafts, thus rendered economically dependent, were finally incorporated in a subordinate capacity. In this way there was produced a species of amalgamation, which, although in principle quite distinct from the one whose growth we have been considering, was not so readily distinguishable in practice; since the two species appear to shade off into each other through a number of intermediate varieties. Speaking generally, the difference between the two methods of amalgamation corresponds to the distinction, already briefly referred to, between trading capital and industrial capital. In the progress of trade and industry

the concentration of production in localities with specially favourable conditions is balanced by the decay of the small crafts which supplied an ever-diminishing proportion of local needs. In the one case the flourishing industry rapidly accumulates a capital of its own, and becomes independent of the purely mercantile interest; in the other case the trading function is developed at the expense of the handicrafts, and the capital of the shopkeeper dominates the situation.

Some cases exhibit a mixture of both tendencies

But while most of the amalgamations, which later on became so general, are clearly to be attributed to one or the other of these opposite tendencies, there can be no doubt that some owed their existence to a mixture of both influences; being in part due to the decay of a number of local crafts, and in part to the expansion of a particular industry. At Gloucester, for example, in 1607, the goldsmiths, pewterers, brasiers, coppersmiths, wire-drawers, cardmakers, pinmakers, and plumbers 'having much chevisaunce and dealing amongst themselves' combined together to form a Company of Metal-workers. As far as most of these trades were concerned, this amalgamation, to which there were many parallels in other towns, very probably expressed the ascendancy of trading capital; but the inclusion of the wire-drawers and the pinmakers is almost certainly due to the opposite influence, since within a few years of the date of amalgamation, Gloucester had become an important seat of the pin manufacture[1].

Later instances of industrial amalgamation

This, however, is to anticipate somewhat the subject of the following chapters. It is sufficient at this point to have indicated that the set of influences described in this chapter was not the only cause tending to draw crafts together; and having done so, all that remains is to supply a few illustrations of the continued activity of those influences, especially in connexion with the three branches of industry which have furnished us with the previous examples.

Metal trades

The groups of metal trades which subsequently arose in many towns seem, as has been already remarked, to have been formed as a rule in the interest of the shopkeeping class, and the only noticeable industrial consequence was that the blacksmith, who remained more of a craftsman and possessed less trading capital than the rest, tended to fall into some degree of dependence[2]. A case, however, recorded at Coventry, in 1436, reveals the existence of an amalga-

[1] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, xii. App. IX. p. 427; W. Bazeley in *Bristol and Gloucester Archaeol. Soc. Trans.*, xiii. p. 260.

[2] See note on p. 83.

mation based upon division of labour and the beginnings of a large system of industry. Complaint was made to the town authorities in that year that the four crafts of the smiths, the brakesmen, the girdlers, and the card wire-drawers being united in one organization, a single master was enabled to employ members of each of these crafts, and to pass the product of the one to the other to be completed. In order to avoid the abuses to which this decrease in the direct responsibility of the craftsman was supposed to lead, the council ordered that the amalgamation should be split up into two parts, each containing two crafts[1].

Leather trades

Heterogeneous confederations of shopkeepers, similar to those which grew up amongst the metal trades, were not uncommon amongst the leather trades. But a distinctly industrial type of amalgamation, based upon the co-operation of different branches of the same manufacture, seems to have been frequently formed in connexion with the glove trade. In 1633–5 the Companies of Glovers, Fellmongers, and Whittawyers of Lancaster, Wigan, Preston, Blackburn, Liverpool, Manchester, Warrington, Newton and Ormskirk, were corresponding with each other and petitioning the government for the protection of their interests. There are no details given of the internal economy of these combinations[2]; but a company composed of exactly the same trades which existed at the same period at Chester, represented an industry organized on the domestic system, and included amongst its members the traders in Irish skins on the one hand, and on the other the working glovers 'who never have or hadd xx^{s} of their own together att one time but buye leather by dozens and half dozens as their means will extend[3].' Similar combinations of glovers with skinners, butchers, or tanners, existed at Shrewsbury[4], Morpeth[5], Norwich[6], Exeter[7], and Bristol[8].

Textile trades

The best examples, however, of the amalgamation of kindred crafts are naturally to be found in connexion with the largest and most widespread of the industries, that of cloth-making; though these, it is true, are rendered less complete by the withdrawal of the weavers into the country districts. Among the crafts which represented the finishing

[1] M. D. Harris, *Life in an old English town*, pp. 266–9.
[2] *Privy Council Register*, Dec. 18, 1633, and Dec. 17, 1635.
[3] *Harleian MSS.* 1996, Nos. 40–1.
[4] Shrewsbury, *Trans. Arch. and Natural Hist. Soc.*, vol. iv. p. 195.
[5] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 111 n.
[6] Blomefield, *Norfolk*, iii. p. 206.
[7] *Trans. Devon Association*, v. p. 117.
[8] Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, p. 217.

processes the tendency to draw together became increasingly marked after the middle of the sixteenth century. The fullers and shearmen were united at London in 1538; the clothworkers and walkers at Durham in 1565; the fullers and dyers at Warwick in 1569[1]; the weavers and the fullers at Oxford in 1571[2]; the shearmen and dyers at Gloucester in 1581[3]; and the weavers, walkers, and clothiers at Worcester in 1590[4]. The list would receive a considerable number of additions if it were carried into the seventeenth century; but the cases given suffice to show how widespread the movement, whose origin and significance we have been considering, had become by the time of Elizabeth. With the internal changes that accompanied this expansion of industrial organization, and with the relation it bore to the economic conditions of that later period we shall have to deal in the two following chapters.

[1] W. G. Fretton, *Memorials of the Fullers of Coventry*, pp. 17–20.
[2] *Records of Oxford*, p. 341. [3] E. Walford, *Gilds*, p. 113.
[4] V. Green, *History of Worcester*, App. p. lxxi.

CHAPTER II

DIFFERENTIATION OF CLASSES WITHIN THE CRAFT GILD

I

Differentiation of classes within the gild

THE process by which one craft gained the ascendancy over another was, as we have seen, not confined in its effects to their external relations, but was accompanied by a modification of internal structure on both sides, and especially on the side of the dominant craft. Within such an organization there had taken place a separation into two distinct classes, arising from a differentiation of function exactly similar to that which, as we have shown, had produced the subordination of one craft to another. This internal aspect of the development needs now to be separately considered; in the first place because it is to be found in a number of cases independently of any domination of other crafts; and in the second place because it exhibits more clearly and directly the gradual transformation of the handicraft gild into a different type of industrial organization.

Illustrated by the case of the London livery companies,

Of this type, which first acquired definite form in England during the fifteenth century, the most convenient examples are to be found in many of the livery companies of London. These interesting survivals, over seventy in number, differ, it is true, very widely from each other in respect of the circumstances under which they were incorporated; and the great majority of them did not come into existence till the sixteenth or seventeenth century. But the constitutional pattern set by the twelve great companies, to which they were all subsequently more or less assimilated, though it was not completely elaborated or universally adopted till the seventeenth century, was in its essential elements the creation of the fifteenth century, before the end of which the greater companies had established their claim to precedence, and had thus become a model to later and lesser incorporations.

which developed an

The two main features of the new type of association were the possession of the legal status of incorporation,

oligarchical type of constitution

which conferred the power of holding property in land, and government by a select body called the Court of Assistants, which in many cases came to be composed of all the ex-wardens who held office as assistants for life. When it is added that the majority of the freemen gradually lost all share in the annual choice of the four wardens, it will be seen that the result was a highly oligarchical form of government. In the later part of the sixteenth century, a member who had attained his freedom in the youngest of the great companies had to wait till he was placed upon the Livery by the governing body, and even then he could take no active part in the affairs of the company till he was co-opted from above as junior warden, after which he became an assistant, and might be chosen as one of the senior wardens, or as master of the company [1]. As considerable expense was involved in each stage of promotion, all but the wealthiest members were permanently excluded from office.

Parallels in France and Germany

This growth of a social hierarchy within a single association was not peculiar to the London livery company. It has been pointed out that a close analogy is to be found in the distinction which the larger Parisian *corps de métier* came to draw between 'anciens,' 'moderns,' and 'jeunes [2],' and the parallelism in this, as in other respects, between the English and French development will receive illustration hereafter. A similar concentration of power into a few hands took place at the same period in the gilds of the German cities. At Strasburg the general body or commonalty (*Gemeinde*) of the gild of clothiers disappears from the records after the middle of the fifteenth century, and the important consultative functions which it had performed in the fourteenth century are replaced by the activity of a select body of officials [3].

Economic significance of this,

At least half of the twelve greater companies had been from the beginning exclusively composed of traders or merchants, and the adoption of a close constitution has in their case no special interest for our subject. But the economic significance of this development in the case of the four or five which had originally been handicraft organizations, is made quite clear by what we know of their internal affairs in the early part of the sixteenth century.

[1] Ashley, *Econ. History*, Pt. II. p. 132.

[2] Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières en France avant* 1789 (second edition), ii. pp. 110, 408, 467, 725.

[3] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, pp. 488–9.

illustrated by crisis in Goldsmiths' Company, in 1529

In the year 1529 a serious constitutional crisis arose within the Goldsmiths' Company. On the day when the company assembled for the election of new wardens, the retiring wardens, in accordance with the custom, presented to the 'young men out of (i. e. not in) the livery' a list of six names, out of which they were to select two to be choosers of the wardens on their behalf. Whereupon three representatives of the 'young men,' with whom a great number of the rest were confederated, demanded of them what authority they had to choose wardens after this manner. And when they were told that 'it was the old custom used in this fellowship, they answered they would see their authority, or else they would choose none after that manner.' After that they departed with their supporters, and the wardens, when they had attempted in vain to persuade them to conformity, proceeded to the election without them, and subsequently appealed to the Lord Mayor to reduce them to obedience. From the petitions and counter-petitions that ensued, a full account of the situation is easily gathered. The 'poor artificers,' who form the commonalty of the company, complain that some persons by usurpation naming themselves to be of the same company (though they were but merchant's goldsmiths, and had little knowledge in the science), with a view to enrich themselves, had devised certain means to change the election of wardens, so that the wardenship was now confined to sixteen or eighteen of the head men only. Their claims are:—that they may take part directly in the election of wardens; that they may receive an account of the charitable endowments of the company; that the common seal may not be used, nor ordinances made, without their consent; that they may share the use of the hall; and that a proper oversight may be exercised over the handicraft. The wardens in their reply assert that the method of election employed has been customary time out of mind; they deny the rights of the commonalty altogether, and claim to rule with the assent of the majority of the livery. The controversy went on for a year and a half, after which the three representatives of the artificers, as they still adhered to their position, were expelled for ever from the company. In this account there is no mention of a Court of Assistants under that name, but the existence of a select body within the livery is placed beyond doubt by a reference of the artificers to the 'wardens and those who have been wardens[1].'

[1] Herbert, *Livery Companies*, ii. pp. 145–54.

Parallel development in other handicrafts,

The control established by the merchants over the Goldsmiths' Company, and the entire subordination of the artificers, finds a close parallel in every one of the twelve great companies which had originated in a handicraft, or included a handicraft element. To the latter class belonged

hatters and cappers,

the Haberdashers' Company, which after absorbing the organizations of the cappers and the hatter merchants, in 1500, received the title of Merchant Haberdashers [1]. The former class included, in addition to the goldsmiths, the merchant tailors, the skinners, and the clothworkers. The

tailors,

first of these had been 'anciently denominated tailors and "linen armourers," . . . but many of the members of the company being great merchants and Henry VII a member thereof, he, for his greater honour,' reincorporated it under the

skinners,

name of Merchant Taylors in 1503 [2]. The Skinners' Company had long before fallen into the hands of a class of traders and employers [3], and in Elizabeth's reign the artisan skinners petitioned the Crown for a separate charter on the grounds that their interests were entirely unrepresented [4].

cloth-workers illustrate process of transition,

In the case of the Clothworkers' Company, which was the last to be included in the twelve, it is possible to trace the process of transition, and to observe the operation of the motives that led to the change as well as the effects that followed from it. By the year 1507 each of the two crafts, the fullers and the shearmen, which were united later to form the clothworkers, had attained incorporation; so that it is highly probable that there was included in

it was formed of fullers and shearmen,

both of them a well-to-do trading element. But they were overshadowed by the superior prestige of the Drapers' Company, which contained most of the larger cloth merchants, and which tended to draw away from them the very members who were most needed to support the dignity and the burdens involved in their new status as incorporated livery companies. In 1515 a member of the Shearmen's Company, who had prospered in his calling, was elected an alderman of the city, whereupon he took occasion to be translated to the Drapers' Company, as being more ancient and one of the twelve great companies. His brother shearmen declared the new alderman to be

[1] Herbert, *Livery Companies*, ii. p. 537. [2] Ibid., ii. p. 383.

[3] Riley, *Memorials*, p. 330. The tawyers are described in 1365 as the servants of the pelterers or skinners. In 1564 they were amalgamated with the Skinners' Company on the understanding that the skinners were to employ them alone.

[4] *Livery Companies Commission*, ii. p. 388.

a perjurer. He had sworn, they said, to live and die a shearman, and their indignation rose to such a pitch that some of them proceeded to inflict a public insult upon the deserter, for which they were punished by fine and imprisonment[1]. The amalgamation with the Fullers' Company, which took place about a dozen years after this incident, was followed by the rapid rise of the new corporation to the rank of a merchant company, and the clothworkers could soon boast of aldermen within their own ranks. In 1537 we find them lending, at nine per cent., two sums of a hundred pounds and one of fifty, to members who must have been dealers in cloth, and one of these borrowers, the famous merchant, Sir William Hewett, rose, in 1559, to the dignity of Lord Mayor.

but soon became a merchant company

In the meantime the records of the company supply striking evidence of the conflict to which this development had given rise between the industrial and the mercantile interest. The craftsmen had procured the passing of an Act of Parliament which restricted the exportation of cloth in an unfinished state; but it was obviously not to the interest of the merchants to enforce the observance of this statute. In 1540 a certain craftsman, named John Draper, had been bitterly complaining before the Court of Assistants that the law was evaded altogether by some of the wealthy trading members of the company. It would seem that his words had been repeated and that they had done him harm with the merchants who employed him; whereupon, he indignantly told the Court that any person 'who shuld open or declare abrode any words owte of this house, yt were almost his hed were worthy to be set on London brugge.' There were, he said, already many heads on the bridge, and if there were three or four more it would make no matter. Being called to account for this language he boldly justified it, saying that it was better that three or four more should perish than that twenty or forty hundred should; so that if the heads of the six or eight, who stole and conveyed away the living of the king's poor subjects, were chopped off as a warning to others, no great harm would be done. When Draper was further charged with having said of the Master that the head of the Assistants of the company was under his girdle, he admitted it, but declared that he had meant to say no more than what was the fact, that the Master, being an Alderman, was looked up to by the Assistants and the whole craft as their head and ruler, and ought to use his authority to reform the

Conflicting interests of traders and craftsmen

[1] Herbert, *Livery Companies*, ii. p. 647 n.

evils complained of[1]. The whole of this incident sets in the strongest light the connexion between the constitutional development within the London companies and its underlying economic causes.

parallel development in Paris,

The transformation of the craft gild by the separation of its members into two distinct classes representing the mercantile and the industrial interests, was as strongly marked a tendency at Paris as in London. The presence of the merchant employer within the gild is shown, by many regulations, as early as the fourteenth century[2]. The satchel-makers in 1344, and the felt hatters in 1387, forbid their members to give out work to any except members of their several crafts[3]; and the hosiers' ordinances of 1367 in like manner provide that 'no one of the craft may work for any one who is not a master of the craft . . . except that all those who have been of the craft and shall be merchants, shall be permitted to give out their wool to be worked in the dwellings of the said workmen and not elsewhere[4].' In the course of the fifteenth century this tendency to a differentiation of functions became common, and was so fully recognized as to lead to an alteration of the style and title of many organizations. In place of the word 'métier' or craft, the ordinances adopt the phrase of 'métier et marchandise.' This change had been effected by the pewterers (1382)[5], the coppersmiths (1420)[6], the fullers (1443)[7], the potters (1456)[8], the breeches-makers (1474)[9], and the saddlers and lorimers (1482)[10], within a period almost exactly identical with the one covered by the incorporation of the greater London companies; and it may be further observed that the three groups of crafts most influenced by the development of a larger industry, the metal trades, the textile and clothing trades, and the leather trades, are all represented in this list[11].

'métiers' become 'métiers et marchandises' in the fifteenth century

II

These changes due to a growth of capital in the crafts

Many of the Parisian handicrafts, however, which had been equally transformed by the increasing employment of

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Nov. 27, 1540.
[2] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 407, Art. 12.
[3] Ibid., p. 277, Art. 2.
[4] Ibid., p. 245, Art. 2.
[5] Ibid., ii. p. 530, Art. 15.
[6] Ibid., ii. p. 501, Art. 1.
[7] Ibid., iii. p. 97.
[8] Ibid., ii. p. 766.
[9] Ibid., iii. p. 222.
[10] Ibid., iii. p. 456.
[11] Cf. also Fagniez, *Documents*, ii. p. 220, where the skinners and furriers of Arras adopt the same style: also Thierry, *Monuments de l'histoire du Tiers État*, vol. ii, where there are many examples in the ordinances of Amiens during the fifteenth century.

capital, did not adopt the change of style, and others only did so casually and at a later period. Amongst the latter were the tailors[1], who had originally been a body of craftsmen working on their customers' materials[2], but who, in the sixteenth century, had become, like the merchant tailors of London and of Bristol, a community of wealthy traders. At the beginning of the fifteenth century we can observe the development in process of being realized. In 1405 the Paris tailors protested against a tax which had been levied upon them as traders in various trimmings which they made use of in finishing garments. They admitted that they kept a stock of such articles in order to prevent delay and consequent annoyance to their customers; yet as they did not, like the doublet-makers, 'cut and make all manner of garments and expose them publicly for sale to all comers,' but only made goods expressly to order, they claimed that they could not be considered as carrying on a trade in the accessories used in the exercise of their craft[3].

The poorer masters are excluded

However much they might deprecate being classed as merchants for purposes of taxation, the masters engaged in the 'bespoke' branch of the clothing trade must have required considerable capital for the successful conduct of their business; and they differed only from the employers in the 'ready made' trade in the methods of applying their capital. In either case it is evident that as the amount required to supply the necessary stock in trade increased, a larger proportion of master craftsmen would find themselves without sufficient means to carry on business on their own account. This result had been produced amongst the breeches-makers of Paris as early as the thirteenth century. An article in their first set of ordinances claiming that a member should not be taxed for merchandise unless he bought a whole piece of cloth, shows that they had already become a body of tradesmen; while another article gives a list of thirty-two former masters who have fallen into the position of journeymen through poverty, but who are to be allowed to resume their old status whenever they are able, without paying another entrance fee[4]. In the struggle to maintain themselves upon an independent footing, a number of masters were driven to hawk their wares about the streets, which led the crafts to make ordinances in the interest of those who paid rent for stalls and shops, for-

and become journeymen

or take to hawking

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, &c., iii. p. 197, Art. 15.
[2] Lespinasse, *Livre des Métiers*, p. 116, Titre LVI, Art. 5.
[3] *Ordonnances des roys de France de la troisième race*, ix. p. 90.
[4] Lespinasse, *Livre des Métiers*, Titre LV, Arts. 9, 10.

bidding or restricting this mode of competition. The armourers of Paris, for instance, procured an ordinance in 1296 'that no one may hawk armour through the streets of Paris . . . except the poor members of the craft who live in foreign streets, who cannot sell in their workshops, and who must take an oath that they have made it in their own houses with their own hands[1].' Examples of the same development are to be found in the London ordinances of the fourteenth century.

Difficulty of attaining mastership

But if the natural operation of economic conditions was making it impossible for many of those who had become masters to maintain their status, those conditions were still more effective in shutting out the majority of those apprenticed to a trade from attaining that position, because in the latter case they were assisted by the spirit of monopoly and privilege which grew up within the craft gilds, and which obtained a decided expression in the course of the fifteenth century[2]. Not only was the entrance fee raised by degrees till it reached a formidable sum, the aspirant was also required in many cases to bear the cost of a dinner or a 'drinking'; and on the continent the custom became all but universal of demanding the production of an elaborate masterpiece, which embodied in some cases the work of several months, and involved the use of expensive material[3]. It should be added that the sons of masters were generally exempted from most or all of these conditions[4].

gives rise to a permanent class of journeymen

As a result of these combined causes, there grew up in every industrial centre of Western Europe from the middle of the fourteenth century onward, a body of workmen in every craft who had no prospect before them but that of remaining journeymen all their lives, and who were therefore bound together by an increasing consciousness of a class interest which separated them from their employers. This development was especially characteristic of the various branches of the cloth manufacture. At Chester in

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, ii. p. 318, Art. 11.

[2] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, ch. ii; Inama-Sternegg, *Deutsche Wirthschaftsgeschichte*, 3, II, p. 71; Brentano, p. cl.

[3] R. Eberstadt, *Das französische Gewerberecht*, pp. 244–9. For early instances of 'masterpiece' see Fagniez, *Documents*, ii. pp. 87, 101, 185; Thierry, *Documents inédits*, ii. p. 151; Levasseur, *Histoire*, &c., second edition, ii. 108.

[4] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, pp. 131–4. The masterpiece was not unknown in England. It was required during the seventeenth century by the feltmakers, joiners, broderers, and clockmakers of London, and by the feltmakers of Bristol. See Index to *Remembrancia*, p. 99; Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, p. 26; and *Livery Comp. Comm.* III. 202.

1358 the master weavers, shearmen, challoners, and walkers had reached such a pitch of exasperation with the conduct of their journeymen as to make a murderous attack upon them, during the Corpus Christi procession, with 'iron-pointed poles, baslards and pole-axes[1].' As to the differences which might produce such a degree of antagonism, we may get some light from a complaint made in the very same year to the bailly of Troyes by the master clothiers and weavers against their journeymen. As it is the duty of the journeymen, say the masters, to work throughout the day without a break, they should bring the bread for their meals with them, and if they want soup, their wives should carry it to the workshops. Instead of this they insist on an hour's stoppage that they may go home to dinner; they abandon their work in a body to attend a mass or go to a funeral, which means a day lost, 'car après convient aller boire'; and finally they demand four times the wages they used to receive[2]. Instances of similar disputes in the latter half of the fourteenth century at Paris, Amiens, Chalons, and Rouen, concerning hours and wages and other conditions of labour, are recorded in abundance; and they find a close parallel in the differences which arose during the same period between the masters and journeymen of the shearmen, the weavers, the cordwainers, the saddlers, and the tailors of London[3].

and to a labour question

So far, however, as is yet known, the journeyman class in England and in France did not attain anything like so widespread an organization as was achieved in the case of the German cities. The custom of wandering from city to city, combined with the want of a central government which could bring the area thus covered by the individual workman under a uniform authority, may have contributed to this peculiar development. Whatever the cause, it remains a fact that the conflict of organized bodies of masters and journeyman was one of the main features of German industrial life in the fifteenth century. The cities were drawn together into groups, and opposing federations, representing the masters in a single trade on the one side, and the journeymen employed by them on the other, fought over the labour question in all its aspects, with results that varied widely in the different trades, and from one period to another[4].

Separate organization of journeymen in German cities,

[1] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, p. 405. [2] *Ordonnances des roys*, v. p. 595.
[3] R. Eberstadt, *Das französische Gewerberecht*, pp. 278–81; Fagniez, *Documents*, ii. p. 148; Riley, *Memorials*, pp. 250, 307, 495, 542, 609, 653.
[4] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, ch. v; Brentano, p. cxlvi.

the tendency found also in France and England,

But although the difference in political conditions may have prevented it taking such an active form, the tendency of the journeyman class towards separate organization was by no means absent from France [1] and England during the same period. In the closing years of the fourteenth century the journeymen of the saddlers, the cordwainers, and the tailors in London were struggling to maintain fraternities which they had set up in defence of their interests; and subsequent cases of journeymen's associations reported of Coventry (1406 and 1424) [2], Bristol (1429, 1458 and 1590) [3], Exeter (1481) [4], Hereford (c. 1500) [5], Oxford (1512) [6], Wisbech (1538) [7], Gloucester (1602) [8], Plymouth (1643) [9], and Chester (1652) [10], are sufficiently widespread both in regard to place and time to justify the assumption that many more would be discovered by a careful examination of local records. But in nearly all these instances it is clear that the journeymen's organization had fallen under the supervision and partial control of the masters' gild. In regard to this development it will be of interest to compare parallel cases in France, Germany, and England.

but is counteracted by the policy of employers, e. g., Paris tailors,

It seems that the journeymen doublet-makers of Paris had a custom that on the arrival of every newcomer his fellow workmen should oblige him to pay a 'bonne venue' of two or three sols. A body of master doublet-makers, residing in the Rue aux Lombars, complained to the king in 1406 that the journeymen left their work on these occasions to drink in taverns, which was a cause of disturbance and dispute within the trade, and of loss to themselves. There existed already, they added, a brotherhood among the masters, workmen, bachelors and servants of the craft living and working in that street, and they requested that in place of the levy made upon the journeymen by their fellows, a sum of eight deniers should be paid by each newcomer towards the support of two beds maintained by the brotherhood in a neighbouring hospital for the benefit of the poor of the trade [11].

[1] Fagniez, *Documents*, ii. No. 76 and 136; Lespinasse, *Les métiers et corp.*, iii. p. 189 n. 2.
[2] *Hist. MSS. Report*, Coventry, p. 118.
[3] Hunt, *Bristol*, p. 81; *Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii. p. 147.
[4] Toulmin Smith, *English Gilds*, p. 332.
[5] *Hist. MSS. Report*, Hereford, p. 304.
[6] *Records of Oxford*, p. 7.
[7] *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, xiii. p. 1, 1538, No. 1454, p. 537.
[8] *Hist. MSS. Report*, Gloucester (c. 6338–1), p. 416.
[9] *Hist. MSS. Report*, ix. App. p. 270. [10] *Harl. MSS.* 2054, 34.
[11] *Ordonnances des roys*, ix. p. 167.

The second instance is supplied by the skinners of Strasburg. A religious fraternity, established by the journeymen of that trade in 1404, was threatened with dissolution by the authorities in 1428, most probably because it was regarded as supplying the journeymen with a powerful weapon in their disputes with their masters, which had led to a serious strike two years before. The journeymen, however, saved their organization by an important concession. In future they were not to exercise jurisdiction over their members without the presence and assent of two members of the masters' gild. On the other hand, one of the masters, as a sign of amity, was to allow himself to be made a member of the journeymen's fraternity [1]. Strasburg skinners,

A compromise very similar to this is represented by the ordinance, articles and constitutions granted in 1434 to their servants by the Blacksmiths' Company of London, which provide for the separate organization of the journeymen under officers of their own, subject to an appeal to the master of the company. The journeymen's representative is to be present at the making of all covenants between newcomers and employers. Half of all fines imposed is to go to the box of the masters, and half to the box of the yeomen; and the two bodies are to be united at periodical dinners [2]. London blacksmiths

No doubt a close knowledge of all the facts would reveal considerable differences between the cases of the Parisian doublet-makers, the Strasburg skinners, and the London blacksmiths. The fact, for instance, that the Strasburg journeymen could retire on the occasion of a dispute with their masters to a neighbouring city, where the political authority could only reach them through the medium of diplomatic negotiations, greatly strengthened their economic independence; and probably tended to deprive the settlement with the masters in 1428 of real permanence [3]. But the fundamental significance of the situation is the same in all three cases. The efforts of the journeymen after independence were being in part sanctioned and in part counteracted by the policy of the masters in providing for them a subordinated form of organization in which any attempt at combined action was subject to oversight and control.

This was the origin of the class of *yeomen* or *bachelors*, who came to form a new rank below the *livery* in many This the origin of yeoman companies,

[1] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, pp. 55–8.
[2] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, p. 117.
[3] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, p. 59.

of the London companies during the fifteenth century, and whose status has been made a matter of dispute. On the one hand, it has been pointed out that the yeomanry organizations, which sprang up in connexion with the London crafts at the end of the fourteenth century, bore a strong resemblance to the journeymen's associations which arose at the same period in Germany; and it has been further shown from the records of the London companies that those organizations, although falling more and more under the control of the livery companies, maintained a prolonged existence, extending in one case at least till the end of the seventeenth century[1]. On the other hand, with a view to showing that these bodies of yeomanry cannot be regarded as forerunners of the modern trade union, conclusive evidence has been adduced from the same record to prove that early in the sixteenth century the yeomanry of the company referred to, the Merchant Taylors, was no longer composed exclusively of journeymen, and that at a later period it must have contained a number of well-to-do masters and traders[2]. On a fuller investigation of the matter the truth appears wide enough to embrace both contentions. The transformation of the yeomanry organization is only another instance of the power of institutions to adapt themselves to the requirements of social evolution. It is not a process entirely peculiar to English industrial history. The term 'bachelors,' which in England is used as equivalent to 'yeomanry,' underwent a similar change of meaning in connexion with the Paris *corps de métier* within an almost exactly identical period; and the economic development which was the main cause of this change, the growing prevalence of the domestic system, was common to all the industrial centres of Western Europe. Of this general social movement, therefore, it will be well to make a brief survey before proceeding to consider the illustration of it, which is supplied by the change which took place in the composition of the yeomanry organizations.

which were gradually transformed into bodies of small masters

III

Formation of class of small masters

With the increasing application of capital to industry, the master craftsman who could not afford to keep a large stock in trade and rent a shop in the business part of the town was obliged either to hawk his wares about the streets or to dispose of them to one of the wealthier trading

[1] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, pp. 107–16.
[2] Webb, *Hist. of Trade Unionism*, pp. 4, 5, and note.

masters. In this way, though he became virtually an employé of others, he retained his position as a householder. But this formation of a new intermediate class, while it was due to a relative decline in the status of a number of master craftsmen, facilitated at the same time an advance in the status of a portion of the journeyman class. For such an advance the way had been prepared by the separate organizations which that class had been led to form when they were excluded from the prospect of full membership of the craft gilds. Those organizations did not aim at transforming the journeyman into a small master. Indeed, it was natural that they should in many cases discourage this result. Yet it is certain that their action must have contributed largely to bring it about, since a really independent journeyman wanted nothing but a minimum of capital to make him a small master. The conditions under which work should be taken up or laid down had hitherto been dictated by the masters' gild. The new associations attempted, often with success, to formulate these conditions on behalf of their members, and even to assist in carrying them out. The journeyman had been paid, in addition to his board and lodging, a customary time-wage. He was now able to demand piecework, and to insist upon a rate which approximated more and more to that received by a working master. He had lived in a position of domestic subordination as a member of his master's household, but we now find him claiming to provide his own food, to marry and set up a hearth of his own, to take home his work, and finally to undertake work on his own account. When this last step had been taken the emancipated journeyman and the decayed master craftsman met, as far as economic status was concerned, upon common ground, and were only to be distinguished by the purely formal requirements of the gild. As a proof of this it is to be noted that the universal regulation forbidding unqualified journeymen to set up as masters begins to be balanced in the fifteenth century by ordinances which prohibit masters from acting as journeymen [1].

out of the emancipated journeymen,

In England the earlier stages of this transformation are clearly discernible in the relations existing between the London shearmen and their journeymen in the year 1350, when the masters of that craft complain to the Mayor 'that whereas in old time they were wont to have a man for threepence or fourpence a day and his table, the said men

illustrations from London, 1350

[1] *Ordonnances des roys*, viii. p. 507, xix. p. 607. *Documents inédits*:—Thierry, *Monuments du Tiers État*, ii. pp. 126–7.

will not work otherwise than by the cloth, and then do so greatly hurry over the same that they do great damage to the folk to whom the cloth belongs[1].' The later stages of the same development are illustrated by a crisis in the cloth industry of Coventry in 1424. The journeymen weavers of that town organized a strike for higher wages, and took steps to prevent any one working on the old conditions. The town authorities intervened, and the matter was settled by arbitration. In future the journeymen were to have a third of the amount paid to their employers for weaving each piece of cloth, the masters were forbidden to fine the workmen more than threepence, and every cottager or journeyman might become a master on payment of twenty shillings[2]. That the small master of the 'domestic system' was in fact replacing at Coventry the master craftsman of the gild system is further shown by the growing ascendancy of the class of merchant employers. In a list, made in 1449, of living persons who had held municipal office, there are fifteen drapers and only two weavers[3].

Coventry, 1424

Strasburg, 1434

The situation in the cloth industry of Coventry at this period finds a close parallel at Strasburg, where, as we have already seen, a class of drapers had arisen in connexion with the woolbeaters' gild, upon whom the working woolbeaters and the weavers were becoming dependent for employment. In 1434 an ordinance was passed to the effect that every journeyman woolbeater may set up a workshop in his house on condition that he gives notice of the fact and pays a shilling annually[4]. The same tendency may be traced in the records of the clothing crafts of many German towns; and also in those of other large and developing industries[5]. The journeymen skinners of Strasburg, for instance, whose organization has been already referred to, had acquired the right at the end of the fifteenth century to do work in their own homes, and were even claiming to make use of boy-labour[6].

Paris, 1404

In passing to France an example may be taken from an industry not hitherto mentioned, the importance of which

[1] Riley, *Memorials*, p. 250.

[2] M. D. Harris, *Life in an old English town*, p. 278, and Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. p. 444. Both these authorities quote *Coventry Leet Book*, f. 27.

[3] Harris, p. 241, n. 1.

[4] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, p. 420.

[5] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, pp. 45–50; Gothein, *Wirthschaftsgeschichte des Schwarzwaldes*, pp. 533–42.

[6] Schanz, p. 63.

was rapidly on the increase throughout Western Europe in the fifteenth century. The ordinances of the silk-ribbon weavers of Paris in 1404 placed considerable restrictions on the attainment of the position of master or mistress, which included, in addition to apprenticeship and an entrance fee of forty 'sols,' the production of an elaborate masterpiece. Those who had passed through the period of apprenticeship, but were not able to fulfil the other conditions, were not allowed to manufacture on their own account; but they were not held in the dependent condition of journeymen. The masters and mistresses of the craft were to give out (*bailler*) work to them until such time as they had made their masterpieces and paid the proper fees[1].

The new class outside the old gilds

Just at the time when, as far as purely economic conditions were concerned, it was becoming easier for a journeyman to set up for himself, the degeneration of the handicraft organizations into close corporations was hedging the mastership about with an ever-increasing amount of artificial restriction, which led of necessity to persistent evasion by those excluded from the corporation, and which gave rise to frequent adjustment from within and intervention from without, till finally it was dealt with by sweeping legislation both in England and France. Journeymen who could not afford the luxury of formal mastership took to working secretly in chambers[2]; or else they followed the more open course of retiring to the suburbs, where they were beyond the jurisdiction of the city corporation, whilst still within reach of employment by the city merchants[3]. From this cause the suburbs, alike of Paris and of London, were becoming during the sixteenth century the main seat of the domestic industries.

Legislation aims at admitting it

With the organization of this class of suburban small masters, and the attitude of the state in relation to it, we shall have to concern ourselves later. The earlier efforts of legislation were directed to the removal of the restrictions imposed by the older organizations, so as to make the position of master within them more accessible to the journeyman class.

This was a motive of Tudor policy

The motive power that produced the Tudor legislation dealing with the gilds was not so much the desire to remove old abuses as the necessity of meeting new in-

[1] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 13, Arts. 1 and 6.

[2] Clode, *Memorials of the Merchant Taylors*, p. 211 (cf. Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. 225, n. 1); *Documents inédits*:—Thierry, *Monuments du Tiers État*, ii. p. 50; Art. 2, p. 111; Art. 5, p. 194.

[3] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 396, Art. 26.

dustrial conditions. The Act of 1503, for example, which transferred the supervision of gild ordinances from the Justices of Peace to the Lord Chancellor and the Judges of Assize[1], is not to be regarded as an intrusion of the reforming zeal of the Crown into the sphere of purely local institutions. The industries represented by many of the gilds had ceased to be confined to the supply of local demands, and had enlarged the scope of their production till they had become organs of a national economy; and it was this fact that justified an attempt at national regulation. In the same way, the Acts passed in 1531 and 1536, which reduced the inordinate entrance fees demanded by the gilds to a small uniform sum[2], and forbade gild officers to require an oath from journeymen that they would not set up for themselves[3], are to be understood as endeavours not so much to restore the gild to its original condition as to adapt it to the needs of the new development, which was transforming numbers of journeymen into small masters. During the reigns of Edward VI and of Mary almost every year produced new legislation upon this subject. The social experiment of one session was not infrequently declared a failure in the next. The mind of Parliament or of those responsible for its action fluctuated rapidly between the desire of checking a too hasty abandonment of the old system and the necessity of recognizing and of regulating the new system. Examples of both these opposing tendencies may be taken from the legislation of a single year. An Act was passed in 1549–50 to forbid the adoption of those looser forms of contract which mark the transition from the journeyman to the small master. Masters in the shoemaking and tailoring trades, or in the branches of the cloth industry, were forbidden to hire unmarried journeymen to work by the day, or by 'taill work,' or 'by greate,' or for any term under a quarter of a year[4]. On the other hand, the Government found it advisable during the same session to repeal in the interest of the small master an Act of the previous year forbidding the wealthier members of the leather crafts to supply the poorer members with leather. Most of the artificers, it is said, are poor men, and unable to provide such store of materials as would serve their turn[5].

Issue between old and new industrial forces culminates, 1549–50

Fluctuations of national policy during transition

[1] 19 Henry VII, c. 7. [2] 22 Henry VIII, c. 4.
[3] 28 Henry VIII, c. 5; see Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. p. 512.
[4] 3 & 4 Edward VI, c. 22, presumably piece-work and contract-work.
[5] Ibid., c. 6. A similar instance in the same year will be referred to later in connexion with the building trades.

These fluctuations of national policy—the necessary product of a time of industrial transition—find an exact counterpart during the same years in the records of a London company, which serve also to supply the link between the earlier and the later aspects of the yeomanry organizations. reflected in the life of single organization

The Clothworkers' Company had, as we have seen, been formed in 1528, by the amalgamation of two crafts, the fullers and the shearmen, which occupied the final stages in the manufacture of cloth. As these organizations had survived the struggle for existence which marked the fifteenth century, and had, previous to their amalgamation, obtained separate grants of incorporation, we may take it for granted that in each of them there was already a trading element which would naturally be strengthened when they were united into one company. The case of the shearman who became a draper, and the references to considerable loans made by the clothworkers to several members, strongly confirm this assumption. This Company contained some traders

Yet the records of the company tend to show that during the first twenty years of its history the bulk of its members were engaged as large or small masters in the manufacture of cloth, and that its policy would in the main be determined by their interests. Most of the entries in the earlier years refer to the settlement by arbitration of disputes, not apparently between master and journeyman, but between one master and another; although no doubt in many cases one master was the employer of the other. Many disputes are concerned with a 'reckoning' or a debt incurred, and in these cases the settlement takes the form of an agreement to pay in small instalments. Sometimes these debts seem to involve the temporary return of the debtor to the journeyman class, as when we find that 'Davy Ellys had commandement to worke with Humphrey Hitchcock or with Thomas Saunders untyll such tyme as they be both satisfied of their debts which ys due to theym by the said Ellys. And yf he work with Hitchcock, then he to paye to Saunders iii^{d} a week tyll he be satisfied. And yf he work with Saunders, then he to paye Hitchcock vii^{d} a week tyll he be satisfied[1].' Other matters in dispute are 'a kersey negligently lost,' 'the rent of certain tenters,' and a shop taken by one member over the head of another. but a majority of small masters

That many of the masters were only in a small way is shown by the permission given in some cases to pay the ten shillings fee for admission in quarterly instalments of twelve pence, and by the existence of several lists of thirty or The accessibility of mastership

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, July 12, 34 Henry VIII.

forty masters who are in arrears for sums of from *2s. 6d.* upwards. If we multiply these sums by ten so as to make them roughly approximate to modern values, the position of a 'householder' will not appear to have been beyond the reach of the thrifty journeyman. We shall probably, therefore, not be far wrong in assuming that the class of small masters of this period was largely the outgrowth of that class of journeymen who were employed in 1350 on piecework; just as the employer of the earlier date had in many cases developed into the merchant of the later period. It was accordingly with the fortunes of the small master that the more ambitious journeyman of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries tended to identify his interests; and the journeyman class as a class, being thus continually drained of its most enterprising members, tended to slip back to its earlier state of dependence. For example, an entry in the *Clothworkers' Court Book* for 1538 ordains that if a master has need of a journeyman, and the journeyman will not work without he may be hired for a certain time, the master may take him and set him awork as long as the work will last, 'and yt be for a day or 11.' The journeyman refusing is to be imprisoned for the first offence, and to be whipped and banished for the second[1].

weakens the cohesion of the journeyman class

This brief account of the relations of the classes within the Clothworkers' Company prepares us to understand the various phases through which the yeomanry of that company passed in the course of the sixteenth century. The first mention of them in the records does not occur till 1543, and is as follows: 'Yt ys agreed that the wardeyns of the yomanry now beynge shall brynge yn their boxe w^t^ their money, their clothe and their torches, and the master and wardeyns to choose iiij honest men beyng Jornymen, and they to be as wardeyns of the Jornymen onely, and they to have the clothe and torches yn their custodye. And that there be iiij Jornymen yerely chosen to the said Roome by the M^r^ and wardeyns for the tyme beynge[2].'

Attempt of the Clothworkers to remodel their yeomanry in 1543,

Now several things may clearly be inferred from this entry. Firstly, that the yeomanry at that time was not composed entirely of journeymen. Secondly, that it was partly, perhaps largely, so composed. Thirdly, that it was sought to weaken the independence of the yeomanry, since they were to have no share in appointing their officers for

implies that its composition was then changing

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Sept. 20, 1538.
[2] Ibid., Oct. 16, 35 Henry VIII.

the future. Fourthly, that the element to be excluded was supposed to strengthen the independence of the organization. This element could only have consisted of small masters. The truth seems to be, therefore, that the now relatively depressed condition of the journeyman class rendered it incapable of retaining possession of the yeomanry organization; whilst the small masters, deprived of all real power in the company by the growing predominance of the trader, found in that organization a useful rallying-point.

Vacillating attitude towards yeomanry organization

Whatever the exact condition of things had grown to be, it was found to be too firmly established to admit of the proposed remodelling. Within a month after the above entry we find 'yt was agreed that the wardeyns of the yomanry shall chose new wardeyns as they have done yn times past and kepe their old order[1].' This old order was, however, one of entire subordination as far as financial matters were concerned. In 1546 it is recorded that 'the wardeyns of the yomanry brought yn vii li. ii s. iiij d. which they received the yeare before and xxxj s. iiij d. increased in their tyme,' for the custody of which there is to be a common box made with four keys. Twenty shillings is to be granted to the wardens of the yeomanry when they keep a dinner, and eight shillings when they keep only a drinking, 'and other ordinary charges to be allowed[2].' This arrangement did not last more than three years. In 1549 'yt was agreed that from hensforth there shalbe no more wardeyns of the yomanry chosen, nor no more quarterage gathered amongst the yomanry[3].' Yet another three years later we find it ordered 'that certen ordinances shalbe drawen for the good orderynge of a yomanry to begyn at Xmas next, and to continue as longe as yt shalbe thought profytable for the house and for the worshipp of the company[4].'

explained by the mixed character of the company

The records of the Clothworkers leave us in little doubt as to the forces which underlay these fluctuations of policy. During this period the company was rapidly rising to its present rank as one of the twelve great companies, and the control of its affairs was passing into the hands of the merchant class. Yet it could not very well be as entirely transformed into a merchant company as the Drapers or the Merchant Taylors, since its *raison d'être* lay in its claim to represent the interests of the industry as against those of the merchants, and thus the small masters were able to

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Nov. 6, 35 Henry VIII.
[2] Ibid., Nov. 10, 38 Henry VIII. [3] Ibid., May 8, 3 Edward VI.
[4] Ibid., Dec. 8, 6 Edward VI.

insist that the authority of the company should be used for their protection. We find, for instance, that a few months before the last-mentioned re-organization of the yeomanry the fustian sellers had warning not to put fustians to shear to any but those who had 'byn brought upp onely with the feate of shearynge[1]'; and, in the month after, an important regulation was authorized, limiting the number of apprentices to be taken by a master fuller or shearman to two, and another forbidding the employment of boys unapprenticed over the age of twelve[2], regulations precisely similar to those adopted in other domestic industries for the protection of the small master and the journeyman.

Final re-establishment of yeomanry

We cannot be far wrong, therefore, in taking the final re-establishment of the yeomanry as the result of a compromise between the mercantile and the industrial elements in the company, by which the former retained possession of the governing body, whilst to the latter was assigned a remodelled but still strictly subordinate organization. The yeomanry had, as might be expected, emerged from the struggle a very different body from what it had been ten years earlier. It had then been thought possible to convert it into an organization for journeymen only. It was now essentially an organization of small masters, as is clearly shown by the functions assigned to its officers. We find them soon afterwards administering a fund which had been raised to supply the 'teasels' used in the finishing of cloth at cost price to poor householders[3]. From the first they had the examination of apprentices[4] before they were made free, and gradually they acquired full control of the admission of householders. Thus in 1561 when a journeyman petitioned the Court of Assistants that he might be 'set a worke by the yeare,' or else admitted a householder since he could prove he was worth £20, the wardens of the yeomanry 'had commandment to provyde hym a master or ells he should be admitted a householder forthwith[5].'

not to represent the journeymen,

but the industrial element as a whole

In 1566 it was ordered that 'there shalbe no householder admytted but such as shalbe viewed and allowed by fower of the assistents being of the handycraft and the fower wardens of the yomanry[6].' And finally the new set of ordinances, put forth in 1587, provide that no journeyman shall set up house unless he be adjudged to be worth £10 on the credible report of the wardens of the yeomanry.

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Oct. 21, 6 Edward VI.
[2] Ibid., Jan. 11, 6 Edward VI.
[3] Ibid., July 29, 4 & 5 Mary.
[4] Ibid., July 13, 2 Mary.
[5] Ibid., Jan. 13, 4 Elizabeth.
[6] Ibid., July 10, 1566.

These ordinances of 1587, which replaced those of 1532, provide that the master, wardens and assistants shall every year at their will and pleasure appoint four of the yeomanry to be wardens 'for the better regiment rule and government of the said yeomanry *and journeymen*[1].' So that by this time it is clear that the journeymen are considered as a mere appendage to the yeomanry; and indeed long before this they had ceased to express their grievances through the officers of the yeomanry, but presented them separately or combined in secret separately for their removal[2].

A similar development presented by the pewterers' yeomanry

The references thus drawn from statements in the Cloth-workers' records have since received striking corroboration in the admirably selected extracts from the books of the Pewterers' Company recently edited by Mr. Welch[3]. The yeomanry are first heard of in 1472–3, when they contributed to the cost of the pewterers' charter; and as far as these records go they were always a subordinate body, being governed by three wardens chosen out of the livery by the livery; but there is distinct evidence of a change in their composition similar to that recorded of the clothworkers' yeomanry, and at exactly the same period. In 1534–5 they had a variance with the livery, and extracted a promise, through the mediation of the common council, that all journeymen apprenticed in the city should be found work to do and have wages well and truly paid. We may infer, therefore, that the journeymen formed an influential proportion of their number. In 1558–9, however, an order was made that none should come to the 'account' of the yeomanry but such as were householders and others as should be thought meet by the master and wardens.

IV

Handicrafts unaffected by the development above described

The transformation of the inner structure of the gild, as hitherto dealt with, was the work of social forces following the main lines of industrial progress. But quite a considerable amount of the industry by which the elementary needs of the community were supplied remained comparatively unaffected by that progress, and continued in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to be carried on under the limited but stable conditions of a purely local market. Even at the present day the butcher and the baker, the joiner and the builder, the working shoemaker and tailor of a small town are often little removed from the simplicity of the

[1] *Ordinances of Clothworkers' Company*, p. 45. [2] See below, p. 120.
[3] C. Welch, *History of Pewterers' Company*, pp. 36, 135, 202.

handicraft system. Capital and labour are both represented in the trading master craftsman who sells the product of both these factors direct to the consumer; and the thrifty journeyman who wishes to start business on his own account does not meet with any insuperable obstacle. A little saving will provide him with the fixed capital he requires in the shape of tools and fixtures, and he will readily obtain on credit the leather or the timber, the flour or the beast for slaughtering, which form his first supply of circulating capital.

Persistence of the local tradesman type

There is, no doubt, a wide social distinction to be made between the small tradesman of this class maintaining a hand-to-mouth existence in a back street, and the well-to-do shopkeeper in the centre of the town who has, perhaps, bought the goodwill of an extensive business, and has a large capital invested in the materials of his trade; but as long as the latter has not become a mere dealer in ready-made goods there is no essential difference in methods of production. Both types belong to the handicraft system, the former representing its earlier phase, and the latter belonging to the period when the gild had taken the form of a close corporation; and while this later phase of the handicraft organization soon began to give way before the incoming of the domestic system wherever an industry expanded to meet the needs of a wider market, it tended to retain undisturbed possession of the trades that continued to supply a purely local demand.

Tailors' and shoemakers' organization: their growing exclusiveness

The best examples of the persistence of this type of organization are to be found among the shoemakers and tailors. It is a significant fact that nearly all the cases of English journeyman organization, already referred to as existing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, belong to these two trades[1]. Apart from the amount of capital now necessary for the conduct of his business, the position of master craftsman was closed to all but the more fortunate apprentices by the largeness of the entrance fee. The fine imposed upon new masters by the Shoemakers' Company of Chester[2] in 1609 seems to have varied from £8 to £12, in addition to expenditure of from £2 to £5 on a dinner and a drinking. Yet the shopkeeping shoemaker or tailor, although as a capitalist he was lifted above the journeyman class, was very jealous of the encroachment of any larger form of business enterprise than his own. In this sense

[1] Cf. Levasseur, ii. pp. 115–8, on the tailors and shoemakers of Bourges.

[2] *Harleian MSS.* 1996, 64.

he preserved some of the gild member's spirit of equality, and if he would not admit to membership those who fell below a certain standard of vested interests, neither was he willing that any member should rise too much above that standard. Not only was any approach to the domestic system carefully guarded against by rules forbidding masters to have any goods made in the country or in any house but their own, members were also prohibited from opening more than one shop, from 'keeping standings on boards or tressells,' or from going out to work in the houses of their customers[1].

gives rise to a class of repairing tailors

The natural desire for independence could not be permanently hemmed in by these artificial restrictions; and the working shoemaker and tailor, still to be found in the back streets of our provincial towns, are the survivors of a class which has doubtless never ceased to exist since the days when the growing exclusiveness of the gild left it outside. The journeyman without capital to set up a shop and without a master to employ him was bound to find work somewhere, with or without the gild's permission, and the obvious opening for him lay in the execution of repairs. The tailors of Hull, amongst whose ordinances was one forbidding work to be done in the customer's house, made an exception in the case of repairs; and to prevent the poor master selling his labour too cheap they fixed the amount he was to receive per day[2].

and to the separate organization of the cobblers' craft

But it is in the rise of the cobbler's trade and its relations to that of the shoemaker that the best illustration is to be found of a successful attempt to evade the restrictions of the later days of the gild, and to secure an outlet for the ambitious journeyman of small means similar to that provided by the domestic system in other industries. The separation of the cobblers from the shoemakers received a formal sanction in London at the end of the fourteenth century—just at the time when an excluded class of journeymen was attempting to form organizations of its own in many of the crafts. The cobblers, who were partly English and partly alien workmen, were permitted to work on old leather or to execute repairs on condition of not encroaching upon the special province of the shoemaker. Though they evidently possessed some kind of organization of their

[1] J. Noake on the Cordwainers' Company of Worcester in *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1857, pp. 317–9; *Hist. MSS. Report*, Lincoln, p. 53; Fox, *Merchant Taylors' Gild of Bristol*; Lambert, *Two Thousand Years of Gild Life*, pp. 238–44.

[2] Lambert, p. 245.

own, they were subject to the authority and inspection of the Cordwainers' Company[1]. Similar relations between the two trades were probably pretty general in the English towns from the time of Elizabeth onwards, since a very imperfect survey yields evidence of them at Norwich (1533)[2], Lincoln (1562)[3], Winchester (1580)[4], Newcastle-on-Tyne (1617), Reading (1662), and Worcester[5]. The ordinances of Shoemakers' Companies often contained a rule that shoemakers should not mend shoes, nor cobblers make them. Sometimes the cobblers were admitted in restricted numbers by special licence on paying a small fee every year. It is clear that they constituted a class of master craftsmen with very limited capital, and served as a kind of safety-valve to mitigate the exclusiveness of the shoemakers' organization. With the introduction of machinery the shopkeeping shoemaker has become a mere tradesman who has seldom served a practical apprenticeship to the craft; but amongst the cobblers there are still to be found a number of craftsmen who take a pride in being able to make a shoe from start to finish; though it must be added that they generally succeed in becoming small capitalists and in combining the pursuit of their handicraft with a trade in machine-made boots and shoes.

The building trades: their peculiar condition

The building trades, as it has been well pointed out by the historians of Trade Unionism, have always worked under economic conditions peculiar to themselves[6]. The mason, the tiler and the carpenter could not, like the weaver, the glover, or the pinmaker, produce large quantities of transportable commodities to be disposed of by the middleman at a distant market. Indeed, they could hardly be said to work for a market at all, so direct was their relation to the consumer. In this respect they were on a level with the travelling tinker, or with the tailor who worked in his customer's house on material supplied by the latter. But a similar development to that produced in other trades by the widening of the market was brought about at an earlier period in the building trades by the extent

[1] Riley, *Memorials*, pp. 539, 570–4.
[2] Blomefield, *Norfolk*, iii. p. 206.
[3] *Hist. MSS. Commission Report*, Lincoln, p. 53.
[4] Walford, *Gilds*, p. 128.
[5] J. Noake, in *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1857, pp. 317–9.
[6] The Savetiers of Paris bore a similar relation to the Cordonniers, though they ultimately became an independent and wealthy corporation, see Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 357; for Bourges cf. Levasseur, ii. p. 97.
[6] Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, p. 8.

and complexity of the single task. For the building of a house there was required not only the co-operation of many crafts, but also in many cases the joint labour for a considerable period of a number of workmen of the same craft[1].

produce a distinction between jobmaster and journeyman

Out of this situation there naturally grew up a class of men who undertook the main responsibility for a piece of work, and thus became for the time the virtual employers of their fellow craftsmen. The articles of the London masons in 1356 forbade any member to take work 'in gross' unless he were of ability to complete it properly[2]. Such a contractor was to produce four or six guarantors of his own trade, who were pledged to carry out the work if he failed. The class-distinction to which this system gave rise was not, however, so marked or so permanent as that between merchant employer and small master in the domestic system. The masters who attempted to secure the position of middlemen through whom all employment must pass frequently did so, not so much on the strength of possessing a necessary equipment of capital and of business capacity, as by virtue of their local monopoly as gild members.

Municipal authorities resist the intervention of local jobmasters' organization

The town authorities strenuously resisted this claim. The ordinances of Worcester in 1499 provide 'that no tylers . . . within the city dwelling compell . . . no tyler stranger . . . to serve at his rule and assignment, but that he may take by the day with the partys that he workith, accordynge to the statute or better chepe yf they two can agree, and that the tylers of the citie sett no parliament among them . . . that no carpenter or mason take more by the day than the law wult, . . . that every carpinter not being a master of the said crafte may hereafter pache, clowt, or repare any old house . . . and make enything else so hit be no new framed work when he is called upon by eny cytisen without eny agreement made with the stewards of the said craft[3].' Similarly at Coventry in 1517 the daubers and rough masons were forbidden to form a fellowship of themselves, but were to be common labourers and take such wages as were limited by statute[4].

[1] Schanz, *Gesellenverbände*, pp. 67–8.

[2] Riley, *Memorials of London*, p. 281; Ochenkowski, *Englands wirthschaftliche Entwickelung*, p. 111. Similar methods are still in vogue amongst the London shipwrights.

[3] V. Green, *Worcester*, App. XIV. p. liii. Cf. a somewhat different version in T. Smith, *English Gilds*, p. 399.

[4] M. D. Harris, *Life in an old English town*, p. 279.

An Act to legalize direct employment of journeymen, 1549,

These were not isolated cases. They were typical of the situation in the building trades throughout the country. Towards the middle of the century, when so many social and industrial problems seem to have come at once to an issue, Parliament attempted to deal with the question. By an Act passed in 1549, no journeyman in any of the building trades was to be prevented by the local craft from working in any town to which he might come for any inhabitant who cared to employ him[1]. If this Act had been maintained the power of the local organizations would have been destroyed at a blow. But the London builders made a prompt and effectual protest, declaring that they could not be expected to bear their share of the local burdens if they were to be put on an equal footing with the wandering irresponsible journeyman. Within a year the Act was repealed, and the municipal authorities were left to fight the matter out with the building crafts on the old footing[2].

repealed 1550

Regulations of building trades at Chester

At Chester, in Elizabeth's reign, the situation described at Worcester a century earlier is repeated, with the difference that the building trades now form a recognized corporation. The company of wrights, sawyers, and slaters are complained of, in 1590, for setting unskilful foreigners at work and retaining daily part of their wages. They are accused also of giving to their journeymen 'such wages they be not able to live on, and themselves taking such excesse wages as hath been a slaunder to the corporation.' The city authorities do not venture to deprive the building trades of their organization, but try to insist on a uniform rate of wages[3]. So far the privileged members of the company might appear to be merely a superior caste of workmen, maintaining an exclusive position by means similar to those employed by some modern trade unions.

illustrate relations of contractor, master and journeyman

But a glance at the ordinances of the company reveals the existence of another class-distinction within it. Among the free brethren who are permitted to work on their own account there are a certain number who contract for work on a larger scale, and these are not to employ more than two journeymen, but must call in some of the brethren to end the work[4]. It is no doubt the presence of these contracting employers which accounts for the amalgamation of the three crafts at Chester. A much larger combination of ten building crafts was confirmed by charter at Lincoln in

[1] 2 & 3 Edward VI, c. 15. [2] 3 & 4 Edward VI, c. 20.
[3] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, pp. 389, 436, 453; *Harleian MSS.* 2020, 16. Numerous parallels might be cited from French records.
[4] *Harleian MSS.* 2054, 17 and 2020, 16.

1565[1]. There is thus a tendency observable in the building trades which separates them from the trades carried on under what has been called the gild system, of which the master craftsman producing work on materials of his own and selling it direct to the consumer is the predominant figure. The master in the building trades is either a kind of *entrepreneur* or he is merely a privileged journeyman.

Victualling trades, invidious nature of their local monopoly

In the victualling trades there was no divergence of this character from the gild type of industry. But one condition which they have always shared with the building trades has served to remove their organizations somewhat from the normal course of development. The local monopoly which each of these groups, in common with all craft gilds, sought to exercise was of a specially invidious character. Its abuses in their case were directly felt and immediately resented by the community, to an extent that was quite unusual in the case of the other crafts. The power of their organizations was therefore held in check by a strong force of public opinion acting through the authority of the local magistrate and the law of the land. The regulation of prices by public authority, which in other trades could only have been a dubious and occasional experiment, had long been a regular procedure in the case of the baker, the butcher, and the brewer[2]. The same Act, which in 1549 aimed at abolishing the local monopoly of the builders, attempted to prevent the victuallers from using their organizations to raise the price of food. There was no question of suppressing these organizations, which had maintained a vigorous existence from early times, and were now, along with the other crafts, in course of being remodelled as companies under charters from the towns. But owing to their peculiar circumstances the bakers and the butchers of the sixteenth century are found moving in an atmosphere of illegal combination which marks them off from other incorporated trades. In the case of the bakers this condition of things was accentuated by the fact that the municipalities became dealers in corn for the purpose of obviating scarcity, and thus stood to the bakers almost in the relation of merchant employers who could fix the price of both material and product[3].

provokes special measures of public control

[1] *Hist. MSS. Report*, Lincoln, p. 60.

[2] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. I, pp. 187–92; Pt. II, pp. 33–8; Cunningham, *English Industry*, &c., App. A.

[3] Brewer, *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, vol. iv. Pt. II, Nos. 2749–50.

Conflicts of their organization with town authorities,

Fully conscious as they were of this antagonism of interests, the authorities were only willing to lend a very qualified support to the claim advanced by the butchers and bakers to a local monopoly of their trade. If the tradesmen of the town refused to supply the community on the terms laid down by them, they were prepared to admit the outsider to their market. The mayor of Chester had at least three serious disputes of this kind with the bakers during Elizabeth's reign, and on one occasion twenty-seven of them had to be disfranchised before they would submit. A similar difference with the butchers in 1587 led to the committal of the whole company to prison[1]. Instances might readily be multiplied to show the constant limitation of the powers possessed by the organizations of these two trades, both by the local authorities and the central government[2], but cases from the two chief cities in the kingdom will suffice as examples.

who resist the grant of fuller corporate privileges to the bakers

At London in 1581, when the movement of the companies towards amalgamation had been proceeding unchecked for a century, an attempt made to join the forces of the white and brown bakers was opposed by the city authorities, on the grounds that the new corporation made it impossible to carry out the orders of the Common Council, which claimed to have full authority to deal with the sale of bread, and the letters patent were revoked[3]. Precisely similar was the case of Bristol in 1619. The mayor and commonalty complained of the abuses committed by the bakers in giving short weight and in preventing foreigners from working—which were ascribed to a recent grant of incorporation by the Crown. The Privy Council, considering 'it inconvenient that any particular company should be exempt from the government of the city, especially in so necessary and useful a trade and of such consequence to the public,' at once recalled the charter[4].

Summary of Chapter

It will be useful, in bringing the somewhat lengthy survey attempted in this chapter to a close, briefly to summarize its general results. In the first place it was seen that the transformation of the craft gild by the adoption of the con-

[1] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, pp. 417–22, 438–42; see also *Harleian MSS.* 1996, 16–22 and 2020, 9.

[2] *Hist. MSS. Report*, Shrewsbury, pp. 18–20; Hereford, p. 340; Gloucester, pp. 448–53. The bakers of Chester made an attempt to obtain some control over the Wrexham trade in 1672, *Privy Council Register*, Charles II, ix. p. 321.

[3] *Remembrancia*, i. pp. 270, 287.

[4] *Privy Council Register*, Oct. 27, Nov. 12, 1619, fols. 310, 326; J. Latimer, *Annals of Bristol in seventeenth century*, pp. 58–9.

stitutional forms preserved for us in the London Livery Companies had been widely realized in London and Paris by the beginning of the sixteenth century, and that this change was due to the differentiation of the gild members into traders and craftsmen, and to the assumption of control by the former class. The beginnings of the economic development which led to this result were found in the gradual exclusion, from the middle of the fourteenth century onwards, of the poorer members from the attainment of mastership, and in the consequent separation of a journeyman class represented by the yeomanry organization. The handicrafts which supplied a purely local demand, as in the cases last considered, did not pass beyond this stage of development. But in the more progressive industries which began to supply a wider market the gild master was withdrawn by the expansion of his trading function from the superintendence of the workshop, and he became a merchant employer, whilst the journeyman regained a measure of independence as a small master. The two new classes formed the essential components of the typical industrial organization of the sixteenth century, the merchant employers being represented by the livery and the Court of Assistants, and the small masters by the yeomanry organization which they had taken over from the journeyman class.

CHAPTER III

INDUSTRIAL CAPITAL v. COMMERCIAL CAPITAL

I

Revival of the local trading monopoly

IT is a commonplace of historic science (of which Sir Henry Maine in his *Ancient Law*, and Mr. Bryce in his *Holy Roman Empire*, have supplied impressive illustrations) that an idea which has once succeeded in materializing itself as a social or political institution does not wholly pass away when its first manifestation reaches a natural term, but hovers about the sphere of its former activity till, in the recurring cycle of human events, the conditions return which favour a new embodiment. There are many such instances of 'metempsychosis' to be met with in economic history, and by no means the least striking is that of the local trading monopoly which in its earliest form was known in England as the gild merchant. Just as the tradition of political unity, which was the legacy of Roman rule, survived for centuries after the Empire had broken up into separate nations, and continued to play an important part in European history whenever events favoured its revival, so, in some towns the gild merchant maintained a shadowy existence behind the craft organizations which had very largely taken its place, and found during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries something like a new lease of life in a modified shape.

due to the weakening of the crafts,

The one feature which the town life of the seventeenth century had in common with that of the thirteenth was the weakness of the crafts. In the earlier period few of them had as yet attained a separate organized existence; in the later period many of them had fallen into decay[1]. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had been marked by an exuberant growth of handicraft organizations. A great number of new trades had sprung into existence for the supply of wants which, if they had previously been felt, had been met by the labours of each household on its own account. The production of food, dress, ornament, domestic utensils, was increasingly subdivided and speci-

[1] Starkey, *Dialogue* (E.E.T.S.), p. 73.

alized, and as every district continued to supply the greater part of its own needs the whole of this extended range of industry was represented in the crafts of every considerable town [1].

In the course of the sixteenth century the narrow limits of this 'town economy' were being set aside, and the comparative peace and security and uniformity of administration established under the Tudor monarchs encouraged the development of a national economy. The towns were brought into freer competition with each other, and the country began to rival the town as a seat of industry. In localities with specially favourable conditions there grew up manufactures on a large scale, the products of which, distributed over the country, drove the wares of the local craftsmen out of the market; and articles of fashion made in London or abroad were brought by the travelling chapman or the local trader within the reach of all but the very poorest.

By the concentration of industries in suitable localities

'I knew the time,' says a character in an imaginary dialogue written about the middle of the sixteenth century, 'when men weare contented with cappes, hattes, girdeles and poyntes, and all maner of garmentes made in the townes next adjoininge: whereby the townes then weare well occupied and set aworke; and yet the money paid for the same stuffe remayned in the countrie. Nowe. the poorest yonge man in a countrey can not be contented either with a lether girdle or lether pointes, gloves, knives or daggers made nigh home. And specially no gentleman can be content to have eyther cappe, coat, doublet, hose or shirt made in his countrey, but they must have their geare from London; and yet many things thereof are not theare made, but beyond the sea whereby the artificers of our townes are Idle [2]'.

Increasing number of wants supplied from a distance

The woollen caps, for instance, which had been among the leading products of local industry in every large town, were being gradually replaced, during the sixteenth century, by more fashionable headgear from beyond sea, or by the new felt hats which were beginning to be made in London. This change of fashion assumed the proportions of a serious social question, and no less than five statutes were passed between 1511 and 1570 to mitigate its results [3]. The effect

The decay of handicrafts, e.g. cappers of Chester,

[1] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, pp. 47, 75.

[2] *Discourse of the Commonweal*, ed. Lamond, p. 125; cf. Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik*, i. p. 469.

[3] 3 Henry VIII, c. 15; 21 Henry VIII, c. 9; 1 Mary § 2, c. 4; 8 Eliz. c. 11; 13 Eliz. c. 19.

of this typical social development on local organization is best seen by taking an illustration from a particular town.

At Chester in 1520 the cappers, on being called upon by the mayor, in accordance with custom, to produce the play concerning King Balak and Balaam the prophet, complained that their trade was much decayed owing to the unfair competition of the mercers, who, not content with dealing in the more expensive foreign wares, were selling cheap caps brought from other English towns[1]. An order was thereupon made, and re-enacted twice as the result of renewed complaints, that the mercers should not sell caps at, or below, the price of 16*s.* the dozen[2]. Yet the cappers continued to decay, and in 1567 we find them making, conjointly with another company, the small contribution of 3*d.* a week, as compared with 1*s.* 3*d.* from the Shoemakers' Company and 3*s.* 9*d.* from the Drapers' Company, towards the cost of the new haven[3]. It is to be noted that it is the competition, not of foreign wares, but of the products of other English towns, that is specially complained of by the cappers. The decay of the crafts was in fact due, not only to the growth of foreign commerce, but still more perhaps to the concentration of English industries in localities specially adapted to them.

balanced by the rise of a domestic industry, e.g. glovers of Chester

If Chester, for example, was ceasing to supply itself with caps, it had begun to supply other places with gloves. Favoured by the proximity of Ireland, which furnished the raw materials, the manufacture of gloves at Chester had outgrown the limitations of the gild system, and was organized as a domestic industry. The Company of Glovers contained two separate classes, the leather dressers or wet-glovers, who traded across St. George's Channel at their own risk for the skins, and the dry-glovers, who bought the skins by dozens and half-dozens and worked them up in their homes[4]. Towards the expense of the new haven the Glovers' Company in 1567 gave 1*s.* 7*d.* a week, or more than six times the amount of the cappers' contribution[5]; and in the same year we find a glover, no doubt a wet-glover, sitting along with the leading shopkeepers, the drapers, ironmongers, mercers, &c. on a committee appointed to regulate the retail trade of Chester[6].

[1] Cf. the exact parallel in Paris given in Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières* (1901), ii. p. 107, second edition.
[2] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, p. 435.
[3] Ibid., p. 461 n.
[4] *Harleian MSS.* 1996, 40–1.
[5] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, p. 461 n.
[6] Ibid., p. 404 n.

In these two instances, which represent on a small scale the two chief aspects of industrial history in most English towns at this period, we see the decay of handicraft counterbalanced by the growth of three different capitalist functions—that of the dealer in foreign wares, that of the trader over seas, and that of the industrial middleman or *entrepreneur*. A widening scale of class distinctions, due to economic causes of this kind, was a general characteristic of town life in the sixteenth century. An order put forth by the corporation of Great Grimsby in 1582 requires every labourer coming to the town to pay *2s.* for his first admittance; every shoemaker, tailor, cobbler, glover, smith, weaver, or tinker, *3s. 4d.* if married, if unmarried *5s.*; every pedlar *5s.*; a mercer or draper *10s.*; a merchant adventurer *20s.*[1] The range of classes here represented—the hired workman, the master craftsman, the retail dealer, and the merchant—is exactly the same as was to be found within the ranks of one of the larger London companies; and there is a remarkable similarity between the oligarchical development already described as taking place in those companies and the constitutional changes effected during the same period in the case of a typical town.

Widening scale of economic class distinctions,

Before the middle of the fifteenth century the government of Nottingham was in the hands of the mayor and a council of twelve, who acted like the wardens and twelve discreet persons of the London company of the same period, with the consent of the commonalty. But in 1446–8, within a few years of the dates when most of the larger London companies attained complete incorporation, Nottingham received its two charters; and by the end of the century it had become a close corporation based upon a self-electing oligarchy. The burgesses who exercised electoral rights had, by that time, dwindled to a select class corresponding to the livery of a London company. Indeed, we find the term 'the Clothing' actually in use in the Nottingham records, and it appears to be synonymous with the 'Burgesses.' Out of this class were elected the common councilmen, who correspond to the Court of Assistants, and the seven aldermen, who correspond to the four wardens of the London company. Both councilmen and aldermen came to be chosen, like the Court of Assistants, for life. The four wardens were, as we have seen, changed every year, but as three of them were chosen from those who had been wardens before, this annual election could not have done much to mitigate the closeness of the oligarchy. To

finds a like constitutional expression in a corporate borough and a London company

[1] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Gt. Grimsby, p. 278.

complete the analogy, it may be added that we find the jury of Nottingham protesting in 1527, precisely as the rank and file of the Goldsmiths' Company were to do in 1529, that the elections were illegal, 'the burgesses and commonalty not being made privy, nor thereunto consenting[1].'

Conflicting interests of traders and craftsmen

It is characteristic of English social and political development that the economic forces, which were undoubtedly largely responsible for this narrowing of the municipal constitution, did not as a rule reveal themselves directly in the result. In Scotland the merchant and the craftsman almost invariably made the constitution of the burghs an open battle-ground, and the merchants' organization or guildry generally contrived to monopolize the functions of government to the exclusion of the crafts. As Dr. Gross has shown, constitutional conflicts were not so common in English towns, and, when they occur, the opposing parties are seldom to be clearly identified with the merchants and the craftsmen. But if the influence of economic development was more indirect and gradual, it was not less effectual.

Political expression of this avoided in England

By virtue of that development, the government of the English towns in the sixteenth century had everywhere passed into the hands of oligarchies of traders, and if these bodies established and maintained their rule without much opposition, it was because they kept an open door for the successful craftsman. An instance has already been given in the last chapter of the manner in which the twelve greater companies of London drew over into their ranks the more prosperous members of the minor companies. The city ordinances of Norwich for 1450 make a special provision for this kind of transference with the avowed object of strengthening the ruling class. It is enacted that if any person 'fortuneth be wisdom and good governance to growe to habundance of worldly godes and likely to bere worshipp and estate in the said Cite, and oute of that craft in which that person . . . is . . . enrolled, a Mayre, Alderman, Shereve or Bayly never before this tyme according to the old Custom and ordinance in the Cite have be(en) chosen; wherefore, that soche person . . . shall not be refused . . . to be admytted and chosen to worshipp and estate, it is provyded . . . that it shall be lefull to the Wardeyns and comoun Councill of any crafte in the Cite of which . . . persones to worshipp and estate here beforn have been chosen . . . that person, . . . likely to bere

[1] Mrs. Green, *Town Life in the fifteenth century*, ii. chap. xiii; cf. the conflict at Southampton in 1505, Mrs. Green, ii. p. 313.

worshipp and estate in the Cite, in their crafte and to their clothyng [to] ablen, admytten, and receyven[1].' Here we have the English principle of an open aristocracy, as proclaimed in the laws of Athelstan, transferred to municipal government.

But however much it was concealed by the effects of such a policy, the conflict between the interests of the traders and the craftsmen was one of the main factors of social development in the towns. It should not be thought of as a struggle between capital and labour, but rather as the competition of two forms of capital. This, as we have seen, is the true explanation of the struggle between the continental crafts and the older gild merchant; and a similar situation arose between the crafts and the later trading companies. What the Drapers' Company of London sought to gain by their charter in 1367 was that the weavers, the fullers, and the dyers might be excluded from competition with them as traders[2]. It was the same motive that led the drapers and mercers of Coventry, who controlled the government of the town, to appeal in 1415 to Parliament for the suppression of the dyers' organization, because the latter would not confine themselves to their occupation as craftsmen, but were also large dealers in cloth[3].

But the economic struggle none the less real

As the trading function in the towns widened its scope and became in addition the basis of a new local industry, it was natural that the purely trading occupations—the mercers, drapers, &c.—should attempt to secure what they considered as their rightful monopoly of it; and equally natural that the craftsmen—the tailor, shoemaker, or carpenter—who were beginning to deal more largely in the materials they used, or the weaver and the dyer, who were putting their small capital into the cloth trade, should resist the imposition of an arbitrary restraint on the development of their several callings. It was not therefore a conflict between two classes divided like the modern employer and his workmen by a social gulf, but the rivalry of the two classes nearest each other on the social scale, stimulated by the larger opportunities opened up to both of them through the expansion of industry and commerce. Taken as a whole the expansion of commerce preceded that of industry, and it was the increasing foreign trade of

The pure traders' attempt to monopolize the expansion of trade

[1] I am indebted for this reference to the great kindness of Mr. J. C. Tingey, F.S.A., Honorary Archivist of Norwich, who will, I understand, shortly publish an important work on the records of that city.

[2] *Report of Livery Companies Commission*, ii. p. 170.

[3] Mrs. Green, ii. p. 208.

the ports that first offered a general incentive to the spirit of exclusiveness. The retailers of the ports drew together into companies of merchants with the object of shutting out the craftsman more effectually from the privileges of trade, which had become the more worth protecting now that they included the right to make an occasional venture with a profitable cargo.

The Hull Merchants' Company exclude craftsmen from trading

This situation is set forth with especial clearness in the ordinances of the Merchants' Gild of St. George at Hull, which are dated 1499. 'Whereas the merchants,' says the preamble, 'havyng non other science, cunning, ne crafftt wherewith to get their lyving but only by the way and the meanes of buying and selling and by great aventour, hath gretly been hyndered . . . by men of dyvers occupacions and of craft and as by tailyours, shomakers and other which presumptouously hath taken upon theym to by and to sell as merchauntts and in their howses, shoppes, and wyndowes opynly haff shewed much ware . . . which never wase apprentises to merchandises . . . it is now ordeyned that fro this day furth no man of crafftt . . . nether by ne sell any manner ware or merchaundise, bot such as apperteyneth to the occupacon and crafftt wherto he wasse bounden as apprentice[1].'

Similar cases at Bristol, Newcastle, York, Exeter

In 1500 the merchants of Bristol, with a view to preventing the 'crafty dealing of burgesses in colouring foreign goods,' obtained a new ordinance from the city council 'that there should be a company of fellowship of merchants separate and distinct from every other companies of handicraftsmen[2].' A similar attempt, made by the traders of Newcastle-on-Tyne about the same time to exclude the craftsmen led to great commotions, unlawful assemblies, and confederacies, culminating in 1516 in an appeal to the Privy Council, and so left its mark, as in the case of the Scottish burghs, on the municipal constitution[3]. In these three cases, and also at York, the Company of Merchants subsequently developed into a company of Merchant Adventurers, and the exclusion of craftsmen, which had been the motive of the earlier organization, survives in each case as the starting-point of the adventurers' charter[4]. The Merchant Adventurers of Exeter obtained a similar charter

[1] Lambert, *Two Thousand Years of Gild Life*, p. 158.
[2] J. Latimer, *History of the Merchant Venturers' of Bristol*, p. 26.
[3] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, ii. pp. 380–5; cf. Surtees Soc. Pub. xciii. p. xxix.
[4] W. Hunt, *Bristol*, pp. 95–6, 134; Gross, *Gild Merchant*, ii. p. 280; Lambert, *Two Thousand Years of Gild Life*, pp. 158–60.

from Elizabeth, but soon after it had been granted the craftsmen of the city, headed by the tailors, petitioned the queen, complaining that they had been interrupted in their former liberties. The only check on the power of the company lay in the hands of the mayor and aldermen, who were, and were like to continue, members of it. After two years of controversy a compromise was arrived at, by which the craftsmen were allowed to share the privileges of the company under certain conditions [1]. These instances reveal a predominance of the traders in the towns, which was just as effectual as if it had found direct constitutional expression.

Wholesale merchants try to exclude retailers, but fail

By the middle of the sixteenth century a further development is observable. As foreign trade became more important and produced a special class of merchants, an attempt was made to exclude from participation in it, not only craftsmen, but also retail traders. But the retail traders were too powerful to allow themselves to be victimized by the spirit of monopoly which they had assisted so largely in fostering.

Bristol

The Merchant Venturers of Bristol had procured an Act of Parliament in 1566 excluding the retailers; but at the next election the members for the city, who had supported the measure, were rejected in favour of others who represented the retailers, and a Bill was carried revoking the monopoly, by which, it was said, prices had been much enhanced, and a great many wealthy inhabitants cut off from the trade of the seas [2].

Chester

At Chester a similarly exclusive privilege, obtained by the Mere Merchants in 1553, was contested at the expense of the city, and was finally modified in 1589 so as to admit any free citizen not of a manual occupation. On the other hand, it was provided that a merchant venturer might use a retail trade, such as that of a mercer, a draper, a vintner, or an ironmonger [3]. While the retailing merchants were thus struggling to maintain their own right to foreign trade, they were using their power in the council to limit the trading operations of the craftsmen. In 1557 the joiners were forbidden to buy timber to sell again, or to export wood-work to Ireland [4]; and in 1567 a committee of shopkeepers was formed to fix the limits of retail trade for all occupations in the city [5].

[1] *Devon Association for the Advancement of Science, Trans.* v. p. 117. The intrusion of craftsmen was again complained of in 1634, and their exclusion ordered by the Privy Council, see *Privy Council Register*, Feb. 5, 1634, fo. 473.

[2] J. Latimer, *History of Merchant Venturers of Bristol*, pp. 52–7.

[3] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, pp. 463–8.

[4] Ibid., p. 405.

[5] Ibid., p. 404 n.

Arrest of this development:

The tendency thus produced by the growth of commerce, to draw together the trading occupations within the limits of a single organization, and so to make a sharp distinction between trader and craftsman, was only a passing phase in the history of the larger commercial centres so far dealt with. Other causes, and especially the expansion of industry, supervened to destroy the simplicity of this classification; and it is only in one or two smaller towns that we find the earlier tendency completed and surviving as a case of arrested development. At Carlisle [1], Alnwick [2], and Preston [3] there were companies of merchants including all the trading occupations which continued to control the trade of those towns, on the lines of the Hull ordinance of 1499, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the excluded crafts having in each case their separate organizations. The Mercers' Company of Lichfield [4], which was incorporated in 1624, and that of Derby [5], dating from 1674, may perhaps have exercised similar powers. But, generally speaking, amalgamations of this kind—headed by the mercers—which remained as wealthy and influential bodies in many large towns, e. g. at Chester, Shrewsbury, Gloucester, Salisbury and Durham [6], possessed no exclusive right to regulate trade, and were often confronted by other combinations more recently formed, and sometimes even more powerful. By the middle of the sixteenth century it was the draper or clothier, and not the mercer, who, in many of the large inland towns, such as Coventry [7], Shrewsbury [8], Worcester [9], and Hereford [10], took the leading part in the local organization of trade. But the separation of the draper from the other trading occupations marks the transition from the predominance of one type of organization to that of another embodying quite a different principle. The leading motive of the Company of Merchants was to exclude the craftsman; the organizations headed by the drapers aimed rather at controlling him. Here, therefore,

surviving examples of it

[1] Ferguson and Nanson, *Municipal Records of Carlisle*, pp. 88–116.
[2] Tate, *Alnwick*, ii. pp. 321–6.
[3] W. A. Abram, *Memorials of Preston Gilds*, pp. 41–2; cf. Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. pp. 121, 130–3; ii. p. 199.
[4] *Trans. Royal Historical Soc.*, New Series, vii. p. 109.
[5] *Derby Archaeological and Nat. Hist. Society's Journal*, xv.
[6] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 129 n. and 139 n. These companies are to be carefully distinguished from another kind of Mercers' Company which will be considered later.
[7] M. D. Harris, *Life in an old English town*, pp. 254 et seq.
[8] F. A. Hibbert, *The influence of English Gilds*, &c., p. 91, and 8 Eliz. c. 7.
[9] V. Green, *History of Worcester*, App. p. lxvii. [10] See p. 87 n. 1.

we pass from the consideration of the effects of a purely commercial development on the forms of the gild to take into account a set of new and frequently hostile influences.

II

Transition from commercial to industrial capital; three stages

The process by which commercial capital was displaced in relative importance by industrial capital was a very gradual one lasting over many centuries, and the several stages of it can be distinctly traced in the successive phases of organization represented by the various London companies. The Mercers' and the Grocers' Companies, which were the earliest to acquire wealth and influence, represented purely commercial capital. Between 1214 and 1222 the mayoralty was occupied seven times by mercers, and between 1231 and 1237 seven times by pepperers (the earlier name of the grocers)[1]. The next stage is indicated by the charter which in 1367 gave the Drapers the monopoly of the trade in cloth made by English craftsmen, and by the later rise to importance of the Haberdashers, Leather-sellers, and Ironmongers, who performed a similar function for the makers of hats and caps, gloves, purses, pins, and hardware. The final stage, as far as the London companies are concerned, is represented by the Cloth-workers (1537), the Feltmakers (1604), the Pinmakers (1605), and the Glovers (1638), whose incorporation indicates an effort of the several industries to throw off the control exercised by the mercantile capital of the drapers, haberdashers, and leather-sellers.

First stage illustrated by Paris mercers,

But the most complete example of the earliest stage of transition from commercial to industrial capital is furnished by the mercers of Paris. Their corporation was the most influential of the six great *corps des métiers*, and especially prided itself on its non-industrial character. In 1543 they claimed exemption from the royal ordinance suppressing the *confréries* of the crafts, on the ground that they were not artisans but merchants, buying and selling merchandize without any manufacture[2]. And Savary's *Dictionary of Commerce* (1750) says of their company that it is considered as the most noble and most excellent of all the merchant corporations, inasmuch as those who compose it perform no manual work except it be to embellish articles already made; which is not the case with the other bodies, which are regarded as mixed because they contain both

[1] Strype, *Stowe's Survey of London*, ii. pp. 102–3.
[2] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, ii. p. 258.

merchants and craftsmen, such as the drapers, the goldsmiths, the skinners, &c.[1]

who from being mainly dealers in foreign goods

As a matter of fact the earliest ordinances of the mercers point to a closer connexion with the silk manufacture than these disclaimers would seem to imply[2]; but there can be no doubt that, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, by far their greatest interest consisted in a wholesale and retail trade in foreign wares. The gold and silver thread of Genoa, the linens and fustians of Germany, the ironwork of Toulouse, the serges of Arras, of England and of Ireland, the worsteds of Auvergne, and various kinds of foreign cutlery are enumerated, amongst other things, in the ordinances of 1408 as articles of their commerce[3]. By the seventeenth century the list was very greatly extended, and the mercers in their numerous branches had become the 'Universal Providers' of Paris. They had also established a claim to a trading monopoly, exactly like the one put forward by the English companies of merchants at Hull and elsewhere. One of the articles of their ordinances in 1613 forbids artisans or members of crafts to expose for sale any merchandise which has not been manufactured by themselves or their servants in Paris or the suburbs[4]. The crafts on their part had been struggling for two centuries to establish their right to inspect all goods belonging to their several trades sold by the mercers. The first attempt in 1413 was supported by the combined efforts of the glovers, the pursers, the pouch-makers, the girdlers, the cappers, the cutlers, the sheathers, the pinners, the needle-makers, the painters, and the lorimers[5]; but on this and all subsequent occasions the mercers were successful in repudiating any kind of control by the crafts, though disputes on the subject were continually recurring down to the time of the Revolution[6].

gradually became employers of the crafts

The later course of the controversy, however, reveals a gradual change in the situation. As Paris became the centre of the fashionable world, articles of Parisian manufacture began to replace many of the foreign commodities formerly imported by the mercers, whose trade was thus

[1] Savary des Bruslons, *Dictionnaire universel de commerce*, ii. p. 1329.
[2] Lespinasse, *Le Livre des Métiers*, p. 157; *Les métiers*, ii. p. 242.
[3] Ibid., pp. 250–1.
[4] Ibid., p. 274, Art. 13.
[5] Ibid., ii. p. 255.
[6] Ibid., ii. 277–82 n. The 'Collection Lamorgnon' in the archives of the Prefecture of Police contains seventy-two regulations dealing with these disputes between 1600–50; see Levasseur, *Histoire*, ii. p. 413.

brought into a closer relation with the industries of the city and suburbs. Although prohibited by their traditions and their ordinances from becoming direct employers, as many as seventy of them were found, in 1687, to be engaged in the cloth manufacture, and were obliged to transfer themselves to the drapers [1]. Without, however, overstepping their rights, the mercers were able to act as warehousemen to a large number of the crafts, and even to employ them upon commissions. In 1662 and 1670, for instance, Parliament confirmed their right to sell carriages and furniture which had been made for them in Paris, as long as the work was done by authorized masters and not by workmen of their own [2].

Similar development of mercers' functions in France, Italy, Germany

The prosperous example of the Paris mercers was closely followed at Troyes and at Rheims; and many of the Paris ordinances, including the one forbidding craftsmen to trade, were copied verbatim by the latter city in 1639 [3]. At Amiens [4] and at Abbeville [5] the connexion of the trading organization with local industry was advanced a further stage. The mercers in each of these towns obtained in the fifteenth century a control over several crafts, including the hatters and cappers, and exacted an entrance fee from new masters. This tendency of associations of mercers or other traders to absorb the crafts in whose wares they dealt was common to many German and Italian cities, e.g. to Ulm, Basle, Strasburg [6], Milan, and Florence [7]; and its significance will be sufficiently illustrated in the English examples about to be considered.

Parallel case of London Haberdashers' Company,

In the earlier period, down to the days when the mercer, Sir Richard Whittington, was thrice Lord Mayor, the London mercers held much the same position as their contemporaries of the same occupation in Paris [8]. But to the later partial transference of the capital of the Paris mercers from foreign trade to the support of home industry, it is the London haberdashers who furnished the closest parallel. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, whilst still trading largely in foreign articles of luxury, the haberdashers were finding employment for a multitude of London craftsmen under the conditions of the domestic system. The serious disturbances of Evil May Day, 1517, when

[1] Lespinasse, *Les Métiers*, iii. p. 175 n.
[2] Ibid., ii. pp. 277–8 notes.
[3] *Documents inédits, Archives législatives de Reims*, ii. p. 560.
[4] Ibid., *Tiers État*, ii. p. 243. [5] Ibid., iv. p. 274.
[6] Geering, *Handel und Industrie der Stadt Basel*, p. 230.
[7] Poehlmann, *Die Wirthschaftspolitik der Florentiner Renaissance*, pp. 45–6.
[8] Fox Bourne, *English Merchants*, pp. 37, 89.

a number of aliens were killed by a mob of workmen and apprentices, is attributed by a contemporary writer partly to the jealousy of foreign competition, and partly to the miserable social condition of the London craftsmen. 'Before May day,' he says, 'pore handycraft peple, which that were wont to keepe shoppes and servaunts and hadd labour and levyng by makyng pyns, points, girdells, gloves, and all such other thynges necessary for comon peple, had thereof sale and profit daily, unto a thirty yere agoo a sorte beganne to occupie to bye and selle all soche handycraft wares called haburdashers . . . whereby many riche men is reson upon the destruction of the pore peple. Which before May day pore peple perceyved theym self having no lyvyng and wer bownd prentissis in London not able to kepe no howsis nor shops, but in allis sitting in a poore chamber working all the weke to sell his ware on the Saturday, brought it to the haburdashers to sell . . . which would not giff theym so moche wynning for their wares to fynde theym mete and drynk saying: they had no nede thereof; ther shopps lay storydd full of byond see[1].'

which absorbed the hatters' and cappers' crafts

This account of the part played by the haberdashers is entirely borne out by what is known of their relations to the hatters and cappers. As they had absorbed the organizations of these two crafts in 1500, they were the sole representatives in London of the industries; and this position was confirmed by Act of Parliament in 1565[2]. From the reign of Edward IV onward repeated efforts were made by legislation to protect the hatters and cappers from foreign competition[3], and in 1511 an Act was passed forbidding any but nobles or knights to buy hats or caps of foreign make[4]. This legislation, however, did not prevent a large trade being carried on in foreign hats and caps, and it was the haberdashers who profited by it. In June, 1514, a London haberdasher obtained a licence to import French, Milanese and other caps, and in July of the same year another haberdasher received a similar licence to import a hundred gross of French, Milanese or other caps, and a hundred gross of French or Bruges hats in four years[5]. It was not to the interest of the haberdashers to take advantage of the protection afforded to the English

[1] Pauli, *Drei volkswirthschaftliche Denkschriften*, p. 33.
[2] 8 Elizabeth, c. xi. sec. 6.
[3] 3 Edward IV, c. 4; 3 Henry VIII, c. 15; 21 Henry VIII, c. 9; 1 Mary, sect. 2, c. 11.
[4] 3 Henry VIII, c. 15.
[5] Brewer, *Papers of Henry VIII*, 1 June 1514, No. 5144. Ibid., 8 July, 1514, No. 5239.

industries by the law, since the profit accruing to them as merchant employers was only a secondary concern. They continued to find employment for hatters, cappers, pinners, and other London craftsmen, but only on condition that the wares thus produced could compete successfully with the foreign commodities which still formed the staple of their trade.

These amalgamations dominated by traders became common in the towns

Such a modified form of trading organization embodying a number of subordinated crafts became common throughout England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It served as a focus to bring together very diverse elements[1]. Besides members of the original trading occupations, like the mercers and the haberdashers, there were found included in this type of organization the prosperous craftsman who had become a shopkeeper, the member of the decayed craft who was employed in repairing or supplementing foreign commodities, and the small master of the rising domestic industry. Exeter[2] and York[3] had Haberdashers' Companies, like that of London, controlling the hatters' and cappers' crafts. The Leathersellers' Company of London, which between 1478 and 1517 had absorbed the whittawyers, the glovers, the pursers, and the pouch-makers[4], found imitators in Lincoln[5], Reading[6], and other towns. The dealers and the craftsmen in the various metal trades were drawn together into similar amalgamations at Bristol[7], Chester[8], Lincoln[9], Salisbury[10], Hereford[11], and Gloucester[12].

Groups of leather traders,

of metal traders

[1] The Norwich ordinances for the crafts, circa 1450, provide for the amalgamation of several 'misteries' in a craft, e. g. bladesmiths, locksmiths, and lorimers, to be included in the smiths.

[2] R. F. Rowell, *Ancient Companies of Exeter* in *Western Antiquary*, iv. pp. 187–9.

[3] *Privy Council Register*, May 25, 1618.

[4] Black, *Leathersellers' Company*, pp. 37–48.

[5] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Lincoln, p. 57.

[6] Man, *Hist. of Reading*, p. 350.

[7] *Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii. p. 181.

[8] *Harleian MSS.* 2054, 6.

[9] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Lincoln, p. 57.

[10] Hoare, *Modern Wiltshire*, vi. p. 341.

[11] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Hereford, p. 319.

[12] Ibid., xii. App. IX, p. 427. In the groups of metal-workers, the blacksmiths, who were the oldest of the crafts, appear sometimes to be yielding place to the trading interest. The blacksmiths of Hereford complained to the mayor in 1554 that, having admitted the goldsmiths, cutlers, plumbers, glaziers, pewterers, and cardmakers to their company, these other members had elected two wardens of which, contrary to custom, neither was a blacksmith. They were permitted to become once more a fellowship of themselves, but four years later they appear united to the cutlers (*Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Hereford, pp. 319–26). The same

The greater variety of classes to be found in this kind of company, as distinguished from the purely trading organization, is shown by the range of the entrance fees. In the Tanners' and Leathersellers' Company of Reading, for example, the well-to-do traders, probably merchant employers after whom the company was named, paid £4, and the shoemakers £3, the glovers and the curriers £2, the saddlers and the cobblers £1; whilst the girdlers and the collar-makers, who were probably craftsmen employed by the traders, paid 10*s*. and 5*s*. respectively. With such a mixed composition the character of this species of organization would, no doubt, vary somewhat according to the conditions prevailing in the locality, or in the set of trades represented; but the trading element in one form or another must always have predominated over the handicraft element; whilst, on the other hand, an organization embracing so many heterogeneous trades was not suited to represent the larger forms of industrial capital [1].

Artificial groups formed by municipal authorities

Both these considerations are still more applicable to the similar but more artificial groups into which the trades of a town were often distributed by the municipal authorities during the seventeenth century. In towns like Reading and Dorchester, where there were as many as five such groups, it was possible to adopt a natural classification into mercers or merchants, clothiers, metal and building trades, victualling trades, and leather trades. Even here the shopkeeping interest must have been generally the presiding influence, and this must have been still more the case where there were only four such groups, as at Kingston, or three, as at Uxbridge and Devizes, or two (the Mercers and the Victuallers), as at Gravesend and St. Albans, or where, as at Faversham, all the fifty-two trades of the town were brought together in the one Company of Mercers [2].

III

A classification of trades made about 1550,

The writer of the *Discourse of the Common Weal* divides all artificers into three classes: 'Off the first, I reckon all

process is observable at Chester where the Smiths' Company received into its ranks, in 1499, the members of nine other crafts. In 1583 it was found necessary to prohibit the cutlers from making blacksmiths' work, but they were still permitted to deal in it, whilst a corresponding liberty was not allowed to the blacksmiths (*Harleian MSS.* 2054, 6).

[1] For similar restrictions at Bristol, cf. *Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii. p. 181.

[2] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. 120–3. Parallels to these cases in the French towns might be abundantly quoted. Vire had one corporation embracing all traders and craftsmen to the number of 214; Cherbourg had also only one, that of the Mercers. Levasseur, ii. p. 746.

mercers, grocers, vinteners, haberdashers, milleyners, and such as doe sell wares growing beyond the seas, and doe fetch oute our treasure of the same. . . . Of the second sort be these: Shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, masons, tilers, bowchers, brewers, bakers, vitailes of all sortes which like as they get their living in the country so they spend it; but they bring in no treasure unto us. Therefore we must cherishe well the third sorte, and these be clothiars, tannars, cappers, and worsted makers, only that I know which by their misteries and faculties doe bringe in anie treasour[1].'

illustrates divergent influences of commercial and industrial capital

This classification admirably illustrates the supersession of the gild system under the twofold influence of commercial and industrial expansion. The artificers here placed in the second class are those who continued to work under the old conditions of a town economy. The first and third classes are contrasted as the representatives of commercial and industrial capital. At the time the *Discourse* was written these two interests had been drawn into conscious opposition, and the conflict between them was fast coming to an issue. But the distinction had been one of slow growth. The successful craftsman engaged readily in trade, and the trader as readily found employment for the craftsman who was less successful. No doubt there were still many cases, as late as the seventeenth century, like that of the wet-glover of Chester, who seems to have combined in one and the same person the functions of a merchant employer, a retail shopkeeper, and a trader over seas.

Formation of a special class of industrial capitalists

But during the sixteenth century great progress had been made in the separation of these functions, and the appropriation of each of them by a special class. The companies of merchant adventurers or 'mere merchants,' which had arisen in most of the large ports by the middle of the century, represented this tendency in regard to foreign trade; and the later corporations of clothiers set up in many of the manufacturing towns indicate a similar specialization on the part of the industrial capitalist. And just as the expansion of commerce, in its earlier stages, led to a revival in another form of the old trading monopoly, so the later expansion of industry was associated with the re-assertion in a modified shape of the local industrial monopoly.

leads to a revival of the local

That the industries which were producing an ever-increasing proportion of the national wealth should be

[1] Lamond, *Discourse*, p. 91.

monopoly of industry by the towns

confined as much as possible to the towns was a cardinal doctrine of the sixteenth-century pamphleteer and social reformer [1], and the guiding principle of a considerable body of legislation. The larger commercial interests of the country, which were rapidly freeing themselves from local prepossessions, were undoubtedly opposed to such a restriction; and it could not have obtained the sanction of public opinion and of Parliament unless it had been favoured by an even stronger body of organized material interests. This support was furnished by the industrial capitalists of the town; and the explanation of it brings us back to that conversion of trading capital into industrial capital which is the central theme of the present chapter.

The town drapers at first strove for free trade in country produce

The draper, who in the fifteenth century acted as middleman to the weaver, had that primary interest in the prosperity of industry which was wanting to the mercer and the haberdasher, since the bulk of his capital was engaged in the trade in English cloth. But as long as the operations of the capitalist could be confined to the towns, it was to the interest of the town draper that the industry should be as widespread as possible. The produce of the country weaver, if it could be made to pass through his hands, might be an even greater source of profit than that of the craftsman of the town. By the beginning of the sixteenth century the greater part of the weaving industry had already migrated into the country [2]. A sermon writer of that time speaks of former days, 'when in London was 720 brode lomes to weef brode cloth. . . . Vitalle was so good chepe in London that tyme when people might liff with little money to make cloth in the cittie, when now vitalle is so dear and scarse that artificers cannot make artificialite good chepe [3].' The same causes were at work, and the same complaints were heard, in all the old centres of the cloth manufacture [4].

in opposition to the town weavers,

The organized weavers of the towns naturally did their best to resist the change. Sometimes, as at Norwich in 1442 [5], and at Bury St. Edmunds in 1477 [6], they may have contrived to draw the country weavers into their organizations; but oftener they sought to shut out competition, as at Shrewsbury in 1470 [7], where they obtained an order

[1] Lamond, *Discourse*, p. 131.
[2] At Bristol the fulling industry had also spread into the country as early as 1404. See *Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii. p. 78.
[3] Pauli, *Drei volkswirthschaftliche Denkschriften*, p. 43.
[4] See note 1 on next page.
[5] 20 Henry VI, c. 10.
[6] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Bury St. Edmunds, p. 133.
[7] Ibid., Shrewsbury, p. 11.

from the town authorities forbidding the drapers to bring in Welsh cloth. That the resistance of the weavers proved in the long run to be futile is shown by the wording of the very ordinances granted for their protection. The town authorities of Ipswich, to take one of many later examples, with a view of lessening the distress and finding work for the poor, made an order in 1590 that no clothier should put forth into the country above half his work, if he could get it as well done within the town, without special leave of the bailiffs [1].

whose numbers decayed in England and on the continent, Strasburg, 1474

The opposition of interest thus produced by the natural expansion of industry between the merchant employer and the urban weaver is observable in the French and German cities at the same time as in England. At Strasburg the clothiers had been permitted by an ordinance of 1474 to employ outside weavers; and the records of the town weavers' organization, in the first and second decades of the sixteenth century, show a great falling off in their numbers, and look back with regret, like the English writer already quoted, to the more prosperous times forty years before [2]. In 1475 the drapers of Paris received a special grant from Louis XI, in consideration of the great services they had rendered him in his wars, authorizing them to deal in cloth brought from every part of France, on the grounds that the cloth then manufactured by the craftsmen of Paris was quite inadequate to the drapers' demands [3].

Paris, 1475

Ulm, 1513

A similar case on a smaller scale was brought by the merchants and weavers of Ulm before the Emperor Maximilian [4], when he was encamped with Henry VIII at Tournai in 1513. The merchants had built up a considerable trade in the fustians made in the country districts and smaller towns around Ulm, which would be destroyed if the restrictions demanded by the weavers of Ulm were carried into effect. The compromise suggested by the city council on behalf of the merchants, fixing a maximum for the number of outside weavers, was approved by the Emperor, and the existing freedom was left undisturbed.

The larger merchant intervenes between town draper and country weaver,

The simple issue presented by these cases, between the free trade policy of the merchants and the local privileges

[1] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, ix. Pt. I. p. 255; cf. *Worcester Ordinances* in *English Gilds*, p. 383; Fox and Taylor, *Weavers' Guild of Bristol*, p. 49; *English Gilds*, p. 285; *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Hereford, pp. 327, 335; *Records of Nottingham* (1494), iii. p. 26.

[2] Schmoller, *Tucher- und Weberzunft*, pp. 501, 513–4.

[3] Lespinasse, *Les Métiers*, iii. p. 163.

[4] E. Nübling, *Ulms Baumwollerei im Mittelalter*, pp. 155–7 (Schmoller, *Forschungen*, ix).

of the industrial organizations, was soon complicated by other considerations. During the first half of the sixteenth century the rapid expansion of the manufacture of cloth and of the trade in it gave rise to several new developments in the condition of both, and in their relation to each other. In the first place capital began to follow labour into the country, so that the country weaver was no longer dependent upon the agency of the town draper. Secondly, the large mercantile capitalist, in touch with the European market, became a powerful competitor against the local trader in the new field thus opened up by the country manufacture. And lastly, the technical improvements in the finishing and dyeing of cloth gave a new strength and importance to the skilled handicrafts occupied with these processes in the towns. Briefly stated, the result which these three developments combined to produce was that the town draper was driven by the competition of larger mercantile capital operating from a distance to fall back upon the protection afforded by local privilege, and to seek, in conjunction with the finishing crafts, to reinstate the town as the regulative centre of the industry.

and the draper becomes an industrial capitalist

Before turning to follow the course of this development in the history of the chief manufacturing towns of England, it is worthy of notice that the fustian trade of Ulm, the last continental parallel referred to, furnishes in its subsequent history a complete illustration of the same changes. Soon after the settlement of the dispute between the merchants and the weavers, the Fugger family, who were the great international capitalists of the period, contrived through the exercise of influence in high places to withdraw some of the territory round Ulm from the control of that city. The country weavers, thus placed on an independent footing, were then employed in supplying a large export trade carried on by the Fuggers in competition with the traders of Ulm and other cities. During the latter half of the sixteenth century the council of Ulm, like many English town councils in Elizabeth's reign, was straining every nerve to maintain by protective measures the industrial position of the city [1].

Tudor protection of town industries

From the earliest years of the reign of Henry VIII to the accession of Elizabeth a constantly increasing amount of legislation was devoted to the protection of the town manufacture against the competition of the country. The first step in this direction is to be found in the acts forbidding the exportation of unfinished cloth, although these

[1] Nübling, pp. 159, 165.

acts were passed in pursuance of a wider national policy, and were only indirectly meant to be a benefit to the towns. During the previous three centuries England had stood in the same economic relation to the cities of Flanders and of Italy as that in which the country, in Western Europe generally, stood to the towns. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the wool, the hides, and the tin of England had supplied materials for the more advanced industries of Ghent and Bruges, Cologne and Florence[1]. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the relation between town and country underwent a change; the country became the seat of a considerable manufacture, but the cloth woven in the country was generally finished and dyed as well as sold in the towns. A similar change took place at the same period in the relation of England as a whole to the chief industrial centres of the continent. The most important export of England, as late as the reign of James I, was still the white cloth, which had to be finished and dyed abroad to meet the taste of the foreign consumer. The only real remedy for this condition of things was that subsequently provided by the gradual improvement of the industrial arts in England. The statesmen of that time, however, urged on by the pamphleteer and the political theorist, were constantly attempting to achieve the same end more speedily by artificial means. The export of raw materials, or of half-manufactured goods, was regarded as the loss of so much potential treasure to the realm. The restriction which had been placed on the export of woollen yarn and unfulled cloth in 1467[2] was extended in 1487[3] to cloth which had not been 'rowed and shorn.' The prohibition was re-enacted several times during the reign of Henry VIII, and special administrative measures were taken for its enforcement; but the lower qualities of cloth, which formed the bulk of the exports, were always exempted from the operation of these laws[4]. For the purpose of realizing the connexion which these attempts to regulate the export trade have with the industrial competition between town and country, it will be instructive to place side by side two statutes passed in the year 1523. The preamble to the first of these Acts is a forcible statement of one of the views universally prevalent in the sixteenth century on the subject of foreign trade. It is declared that 'Merchaunt Strangers

exemplified in the restrictions on export of unfinished cloth,

'with a view to finding more employment'

[1] Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. pp. 197–8.
[2] 7 Edward IV, c. 3. [3] 3 Henry VII, c. 11.
[4] 3 Henry VIII, c. 7; 5 Henry VIII, c. 3; 14 & 15 Henry VIII, c. 1; 27 Henry VIII, c. 13; 33 Henry VIII, c. 19.

studying and imagynyng the policies, wayes, and meanys to set aworke the people inhabited in forren Countryes and Regions with and by the commodities of the Realme and to bryng the Kynge's naturall subjectes from occupation to idleness, Do dayly convey transporte and carie out of this Realme of England for theire own singuler lucre a great nombre of Brode White Wollen Clothes to be coulored dyed and wrought in dyvers and sondrie partes beyond the Sees to the great encrease comforte profitte and advantage of the people inhabited in the said outward and forren regions, and to the utter ruyne decay impoverysshyng and undoyng of a great nombre of the Kynge's owne naturall Subjectes[1].' This indirect statement of economic doctrine is all the more worthy of attention as it is largely gratuitous, since the provisions of the Act are not directed against the export itself, but only against the manner of it, and against the methods of the merchant strangers, who are accused of selling large quantities of cloth direct from the makers on credit 'by fayr promyses and subtyle adulacions,' and then failing to meet their engagements. Henceforward no inhabitant of the realm is to sell cloth to the foreign merchants except in the ports or at fairs. The aliens may, however, continue to buy for ready money or wares certain kinds of white cloth, and especially that made in several industrial villages of Essex. These and other provisions of the Act make it clear that the country manufacturer had been accustomed to dispose of his cloth direct to the foreign trader, and that it was now sought to divert this trade into the hands of the London merchant, who might bargain for the cloth in the localities where it was made, and who, if it was brought up to London, had the first eight days' refusal of it at his head quarters in Blackwell Hall. It will thus be seen that, whether through the alien merchant or the London draper, the country maker was being brought into direct connexion with the larger channels of commerce; and it is obvious that, in proportion as this outlet for country cloth was more utilized, the town drapers' sphere of operations must have been correspondingly encroached upon.

The country weaver sells to the London merchant

The tendency of this rivalry was to lead the town draper to make common cause with the finishing industries still carried on in the towns, and to take advantage of the prevailing opinion against the export of half-manufactured goods. The second of the two statutes already referred to as having been passed in 1523 supplies the earliest illustration of this result. The Act is concerned with the

The town draper throws his capital into town industry

[1] 14 & 15 Henry VIII, c. 1.

organization of the worsted industry, which had its centre at Norwich. The weaving of worsteds had been spread for more than a century through Norfolk and Suffolk, and since 1444[1] the country weavers had chosen four wardens to act with those of the city. As Yarmouth and Lynn, where a flourishing industry was carried on, were corporate towns, they were now to have wardens of their own, authorized to search and seal cloth, but subject to the supervision of the mayor of Norwich and of the original eight wardens for the city and country. It is, however, the provisos, with which this grant was safeguarded, that specially demand attention. The last two clauses were to the effect that none of the worsteds woven outside Norwich were to be shorn, dyed, or calendered except in that city, and that no worsteds were to be exported that were not shorn, dyed, and calendered[2]. There can be little doubt that these provisions for the protection of the shearmen and dyers of Norwich were promoted by the Norwich drapers, with the intention of keeping the final stages of the manufacture under their own control, and thus excluding the competition of the country capitalist.

and procures legislation for its protection,

That the struggle between town and country was at this time due primarily to the rivalry, not of the craftsmen, but of their employers, is clearly shown by the language of the Act, which, in 1533–4, gave a monopoly of the cloth manufacture within Worcestershire to the clothiers of Worcester, Evesham, Droitwich, Kidderminster, and Bromsgrove. The two conflicting interests are, on the one hand, that of the town capitalists, who have 'sett aworke the pore people of the same citie, borowes and townes, and of the Countre adjoinyng to them dayly, as in spynnyng, cardyng and breakyng and sortyng of wolles, and the handcraftes there inhabytynge as weavers, fullers, sheremen and dyers;' and, on the other hand, that of the country capitalists 'dwelling in the hamletts, throps and villages adjoyning to the seid Citie borowes and townes within the seid Shire,' who 'have not only engrossed and takyn into their handes dyverse and sondre fermes, and become fermers, grasiers, and husbandmen, but also doo exercise, use and occupie the mysteries of cloth-makyng, wevyng, fullyng, and sheryng[3].' It was evidently the influence of the town clothier, rather than that of the town craftsman, that secured this prohibition of the country manufacture; and this surmise is strengthened by the speedy breakdown of an Act passed in 1551 in the sole

[1] 23 Henry VI, c. 4. [2] 14 & 15 Henry VIII, c. 3.
[3] 25 Henry VIII, c. 18.

interest of the craftsman, to the effect that 'no person should weave, or make, or put to weaving, or making, any broad woollen cloth' unless he had been apprenticed or worked at the trade seven years[1]. This restriction struck at the position of the merchant employer in the town as well as in the country. 'Many good clothiers, dwelling in Worcester and other good cities and towns,' made their complaint heard in Parliament, and in 1554, three years after it had been passed, the Act was confined in its operations to the country districts[2].

culminating in the Weavers' Act of 1555,

The Weavers' Act of 1555, in spite of an eloquent preamble setting forth the grievances of the poor weavers and their oppression by wealthy clothiers, shows, upon careful examination, the same influences at work.

This Act has been described by Froude 'as shining like a fair gleam of humanity in the midst . . . of the cruelties of that melancholy time,' on the ground that it represents a benevolent attempt to put down the evils of capitalism in town and country alike, by rendering the craftsmen 'independent of masters who only sought to make their own advantage at the expense of labour, and enabling them to maintain themselves in manly freedom[3].' This favourable view is unfortunately based on the supposition that the first clause of the Act forbidding country clothiers to have more than one loom each in their possession, or to hire out looms to others, is followed by a provision limiting weavers *living in towns* to two looms[3]. The fact is, however, that the second clause, like the first, distinctly applies only to those 'dwelling *out of* Citie, Burghe, Market Towne or Towne Corporate'; and this is also the case with the sixth clause, which limits the country weaver to two apprentices. It is true that the third and fourth clauses, which forbid weavers to carry on fulling or dyeing, or fullers to possess looms for weaving, appear at first sight to be of universal application. But the wording of these clauses distinctly implies that this limitation to one craft was to be removed if the weaver or fuller became a clothier; and the next clause goes on to provide that in future no person shall set up as a clothier except in a town or in a place where the cloth manufacture has been established for ten years[4].'

which was passed not so much in the interests of the craftsmen

as in those of the town employer

Although, therefore, the Act may possibly have served incidentally to protect some of the poorer craftsmen, its

[1] 5 & 6 Edward VI, c. 8. [2] 1 Mary, sect. 7, c. 7.
[3] Froude, *History of England*, i. pp. 55–7.
[4] 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, c. 11.

main purpose was to keep the control of the industry in the hands of the town employers by checking the growth of a class of country capitalists; and in this respect it supplemented the Act of the previous year, which forbade country dealers to sell cloth or other wares in towns except by wholesale, in which case it would have to pass through the hands of the town trader[1]. The Weavers' Act represented in fact the general application of a policy which had been in course of adoption in regard to particular towns for the previous twenty years, and which found a further exemplification during the same session in an Act giving to Bridgewater, Taunton, and Chard the right to seal all cloths made in Somerset.

IV

The same influences actuated municipal policy

That this body of protective legislation just reviewed was due, in the main, to the influence of the capitalists, who formed the ruling classes of the towns, is further shown by the subsequent course of municipal policy. From the middle of the sixteenth century onwards to the middle of the seventeenth, the adoption of measures with a view to arrest the decay of the town industries became practically universal[2]. The town authorities were not content with the negative remedies furnished by protective Acts of Parliament. It was recognized that the economic advantages possessed by the country districts must be counterbalanced in a more positive way. The competition of cheap country labour might, it was thought, be met by utilizing the labour of the increasing class of dependent poor. General contributions were levied to provide capital for this form of municipal enterprise; and legacies left with the same object by local benefactors became quite common in the sixteenth century[3]. The town council was not, as a rule, a direct employer. It lent out its capital on favourable terms to contracting clothiers, who were thus tempted to

[1] 2 & 3 Philip and Mary c. 12. For much other attempted legislation with the same object about this time see *House of Commons Journal*, i. pp. 15, 22, 28, 60; and Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., third edition, ii. pp. 26-7 and notes.

[2] Lamond, *Discourse*, p. 129.

[3] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Lincoln, pp. 26, 97; Shrewsbury, p. 19; Leonard, *English Poor Relief*, pp. 110 et seq.; R. H. Morris, *Chester*, pp. 362 et seq.; *Harleian MSS.* 2046, 4-7; M. D. Harris, *Life in an old English town*, pp. 258, 313. The most remarkable of these legacies was that of Sir T. White (founder of St. John's College, Oxford), which supplied a fund for a loan to circulate amongst twenty-four towns; see Clode, *Merchant Taylors*, ii. p. 178.

come from a distance and set up new branches of manufacture. Sometimes the newcomer undertook for a consideration not merely to teach the children of the poor, but to feed them [1]. These experiments were frequently failures. After a time one or both parties became discontented with the bargains that had been struck, and the arrangement broke down; but the old contractor was generally replaced by a new one who had hopes, very often ill-founded, of better results [2].

Effects of municipal enterprise on status of workers,

This interesting aspect of the subject belongs, however, rather to the history of English poor relief than to our special province [3]. What we are directly concerned with here is the effect of this development on industrial organization. Undoubtedly it tended to pauperize some of the classes engaged in the cloth industry in the towns. The poor, mostly women and children, employed by the contractor, were in no position to benefit by collective bargaining. The only check on the employer lay in the town authorities who at one time fixed a piecework rate [4], and at another time contented themselves with a vague stipulation that a reasonable wage should be paid [5]. An order, promulgated at Bury St. Edmunds in 1570, shows how completely some of the townworkers were deprived of their economic independence under these conditions. Every spinster is to have six pounds of wool every week, and to bring the same home every Saturday at night, and, if any fail so to do, the clothier is to give notice to the constable [6]. As, however, the spinning of wool had from the earliest times been carried on in the country, for the most part by women and children, it had never been a well-organized industry, and may therefore not have suffered much in status from such regulations.

especially of the weavers; case of Lincoln

With the weavers the case was very different. Their gilds, which had been the earliest and most widespread of industrial organizations, were now being daily weakened not merely by the migration of the industry into the country, but also in many cases by the very measures adopted by

[1] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Plymouth, p. 268.

[2] Ibid., also Morris, *Chester*, p. 365; *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Lincoln, p. 97; Miss Seller's article in *Historical Review* 1897, p. 438, on York in the seventeenth century; J. Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, pp. 40, 65.

[3] For an excellent account of the later developments, see Miss Leonards, *Early History of English Poor Relief*.

[4] R. H. Morris, *Chester*, p. 409.

[5] *Harleian MSS.* 2046, 4.

[6] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Bury St. Edmunds, p. 159.

the towns for their own protection. The towns could no longer prohibit the country weaving, and if they were to compete with it successfully they must set aside the restrictions imposed by the gilds, and offer every encouragement to new enterprise. In 1550 the city of Lincoln made over one of its disused parish churches, along with the churchyard and other land, to some clothiers for the making of a walk-mill and a dyehouse, on condition of their producing twenty broadcloths every year. The clothiers were to take all such young people as lived in idleness, for eight or nine years, giving them meat, drink, clothes, and other necessaries sufficient, and those who would not work were to have a month's warning to leave the city. Letters were to be given to the clothiers asking 'noblemen or worshipful men' for help in their new enterprise, and any lawful means found by any one for improving the trade were to be sanctioned. The mayor was to lend them his countenance by joining the fellowship. The weavers, upon whose trade this enterprise must have been a serious encroachment, were not able to exclude the new-comers. All they could do was to insist that, in addition to paying an 'upset,' they should make a yearly contribution as 'loom's farm' to the weavers' fellowship, and should refrain from working any cloth but their own[1].

Resistance of weavers at Chester

To a similar piece of municipal enterprise the weavers of Chester offered, in 1575, a more vigorous resistance. The mayor had made arrangements for the introduction of a number of skilled workers to set up the making of Shrewsbury cloth; but the attitude of the weavers was so threatening that the strangers were obliged to withdraw. The corporation, however, insisted on receiving the Shrewsbury men, but allowed a stipulation that the latter should confine themselves to their own branch of manufacture, and that they should carry it on in their own dwelling-houses or shops, and not elsewhere[2].

Tendency of clothing crafts towards amalgamation,

But the time was come when none of the clothing crafts, and least of all the weavers, could longer hope to maintain an isolated independence. If they were to share in the benefits of the movement for the protection of the town industries, it must be by accepting a subordinate position

[1] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Lincoln, pp. 44–5. The meaning of the last provision is doubtful. It may have been intended to prevent the finishing of cloth woven outside the city.

[2] Morris, *Chester*, p. 408; cf. Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, p. 40, for a similar struggle between the municipality and the weavers.

in the larger and more complex forms of organization to which that movement was giving birth. In every town where the cloth industry was of any importance, the authorities were constantly exercised, during the sixteenth century, by the problem of reconciling the conflicting interests involved in it; and the task of bringing these interests into some kind of agreement was lessened by the presence of a common enemy in the shape of a flourishing country manufacture.

strengthened by municipal regulation,

In some towns an all-embracing system of public inspection served to link the various clothing crafts together, and the natural development of the industry brought its various branches into constantly closer relations[1]. The more prosperous masters in each craft could not be prevented from extending their business into the domain of the other crafts. The dyer became an employer of shearmen, the shearman an employer of dyers; and there were even weavers who gave out their cloth to be finished before they disposed of it to the merchant. The various crafts were, in fact, engaged in a constant struggle as to which of them should secure the economic advantage of standing between the rest and the market[2]. But in each craft there were generally a number of masters who were to some extent dealers in cloth. On the other hand, the drapers, as we have seen, had often acquired an interest in the prosperity of the crafts engaged in the finishing process. By this interlacing of the interests of dealer and craftsman the way was gradually prepared for a new form of organization, embracing both classes, which naturally sought to extend its authority as widely over the manufacture as possible.

and sanctioned by Act of Parliament

The system of municipal regulation had already supplied the framework for such an organization, and the enterprise of the town authorities furnished the initiative in its creation; but the grant of a monopoly by Parliament, which would shield trader and craftsman alike from outside competition, would naturally seem to afford the most encouraging basis for the experiment. It is, accordingly, in connexion with such a grant of exclusive right to carry on a species of manufacture, which they claimed to have introduced into England, that we find the mayor and aldermen of Norwich obtaining the first legislative sanction for the new species of corporation. The trading element which had supplied

[1] Cf. Regulation of clothing crafts in Bourges in 1579, Levasseur, ii. p. 100.

[2] Fox and Taylor, *Weavers' Guild at Bristol*, p. 70; *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Lincoln, p. 55.

the capital for the undertaking was to be represented by the mayor, six aldermen, and six merchant citizens; whilst the element of handicraft was found in 'eight of the most discreet and worthy men of the mistery of worsted weavers[1].' By this Act of 1554, which is one more of the many evidences of the stand then being made for the protection of town industries, the sanction of Parliament was given to a type of industrial organization which, by a gradual process of adaptation, had already come to prevail pretty generally amongst the livery companies of London. From the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, a steady progress towards the predominance of this type is to be observed in the organization of the cloth industry throughout the country.

This movement represents the displacement of trading capital by industrial capital:

The two aspects of this development, the drawing together of the several crafts into a single association, on the one hand, and the gradual differentiation, on the other hand, between the two classes of merchant employer and small master, have been dealt with at length in earlier chapters. The numerous companies of drapers or clothiers, which were the results of this twofold process, were by no means uniform in their constitutions, or in the method of their sanction. At Coventry, for instance, a monopoly like that granted to Norwich was, in 1568, vested in the town authorities; but it was based, not on an Act of Parliament, but on a covenant with the Queen[2]. In other cases, as at Shrewsbury and at Worcester, the grants made (by an Act in the former case, and by a charter in the latter) were not to the municipal body, but to a private association. Yet another form of sanction for the new type of corporation is represented by the ordinances which the authorities of Ipswich issued, in 1590, for regulating the company of clothworkers, shearmen, and dyers, and 'for promoting the industries of the said artisans, and controlling all persons living by the said vocation within the liberties of the borough[3].' Behind such differences of form, however, these cases have all one essential feature in common. They represent the rise to predominance in many of the towns of organized industrial capital, as contrasted with the organized trading capital represented by the companies of merchants or of mercers. Strictly speaking, the difference implied by the use of these terms was only one of degree. A part of the mercers' capital was often employed, as we

[1] 1 & 2 Philip and Mary, c. 4.
[2] *State Papers Dom., Elizabeth*, xlvi. 52.
[3] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, ix. Pt. I. 255.

have seen, in the support of industry, whilst the drapers and the clothiers retained a considerable interest in trade.

illustration of this from Bristol,

The situation which served as the starting-point for this rivalry is admirably illustrated by the case of Bristol. The company of merchants there, which had already had a flourishing existence of more than a century, sought and obtained in 1568 exclusive privileges of trade as a company of merchant adventurers. A strong protest was, however, made by those interested in the cloth industry through the Mayor and the members of Parliament, and in the end the monopoly was withdrawn. The complaint of the tuckers or fullers on this occasion shows how much the sphere of activity of the merchant adventurer and that of the merchant employer overlapped each other. The merchant adventurers had declared that, owing to the decay of their trade, they had not been able to put the commons on work, and by this 'subtyl fetch' they obtained the obnoxious grant. 'But what happened unto thee, O Bristow, by these means? Bondage, bondage, and misery! . . . A number of honest occupiers are cut off from occupying unto the sea at whose hands the poore craft of towchars earned more in a year than they do now by ii or iii c li by the yeare. No man must medyl with merchants' craft, and yet they wyll entermedyll with other men's, for they have taken upon them to fold and tuche cloth by which the poore craft of towchars is impugned. . . . Some merchants use clothyers of the country so unhonestly that we have harde some of the clothyers swear that they wyll sell their cloth at London [1].'

from Shrewsbury,

At Shrewsbury in 1565 a similar situation had arisen, except that the spirit of aggression and monopoly were on the other side. The Mercers' Company had in the fifteenth century been the wealthiest and most influential trade organization in Shrewsbury, and included at that time the goldsmiths and apparently the drapers [2]. But by the reign of Elizabeth the drapers possessed a powerful organization of their own. They had provided, at their common cost, houses and other necessaries for a number of poor people whom they kept employed, presumably as spinners and weavers, and they found work in addition for over six hundred shearmen. On these grounds they obtained from Parliament an Act granting them the monopoly of the trade of cloth in Shrewsbury [3], which was, however, re-

[1] Fox and Taylor, *Weavers' Guild of Bristol*, p. 91.

[2] *Shrewsbury Archaeological and Natural History Soc. Trans.*, iv. p. 195.

[3] 8 Elizabeth, c. 7.

pealed six years later because it had had a bad effect on the town, and the poor artificers complained that there were fewer persons to set them to work[1]. Yet the drapers did not abandon their aims. They maintained a long struggle for the exclusion, not only of the rival traders of their own town, but also of the agents whom the London merchants sent to the Welsh markets[2]. In 1619 a judicial committee of the Privy Council was appointed to consider the differences between the mercers and the drapers of Shrewsbury. The mercers claimed that they were entitled by custom and practice to carry on the trade in cloth which they had from time to time exercised with all freedom[3]. But the committee decided that 'the trade of a draper is a trade and mistery under 5 Elizabeth, and that the course of bying of clothes at Oswestry rawe and undressed, and working and dressing, sometimes dyeing them, is, and hath bin the greatest part of the drapers' trade . . . that the trade of draperie, by reason of the variety of clothes, requires men of experience, and that the mercers accordingly ought not to meddle[4].' The monopoly thus restored to the drapers was two years later discovered once more to be inexpedient[5], but the principle laid down by the Privy Council retains its value as a landmark in the development we are describing.

and from Chester

One more illustration will serve to bring out more clearly the relations of the various classes involved in this conflict of interests. At Chester, in 1602, one Thomas Sayers, who had set up business in an outlying district much frequented by the domestic industries, and who 'set many poor on work' in making thread for the tradesmen of the city, received his freedom on the payment of ten pounds. He subsequently became a leading spirit of the Linendrapers' Company, and before long the mercers were complaining that several linen-drapers, including Sayers, were encroaching on their trade. The dispute came to a head in 1634, when Sayers and the other officers of the linen-drapers were imprisoned for unfitting speeches. Evidence was given that they had spoken of suing for a charter from the Crown which would make them independent of the city authorities. By that time, in addition to the mercers, we find the weavers also arrayed against the linen-drapers,

[1] 14 Elizabeth, c. 12.
[2] *Privy Council Register*, May 2, 11, 16, Aug. 31, and Sept. 17, 1613; also May 23, 1619.
[3] Ibid., June 12, 1619, p. 235, and Oct. 27, 1619, p. 310.
[4] Ibid., Nov. 10, 1619, p. 321. [5] Ibid., June 13, 1621, p. 52.

who were charged not only with retailing silk and with monopolizing the trade in linen, but also with employing a number of women in thread-making. Sayers and his colleagues were ultimately released on a promise of submission to the ruling of the council [1].

Similar development on the continent

The history of the London organizations, to be dealt with in subsequent chapters, will reveal the same fundamental opposition as is manifested in these disputes, in a number of varying phases; nor was it in any way a development confined to England. As we have already seen, the drapers of Paris succeeded in 1687 in compelling a large number of mercers who had engaged in the cloth manufacture to transfer themselves to the Drapers' Company; and a similar struggle is recorded of Rheims in 1705–8, in which the final victory seems to have been on the side of the mercers [2].

IV

Effect of these tendencies on national policy:

In concluding this chapter it is desirable to return for a moment to a more broadly national aspect of the subject. Springing as they did from the interaction of economic forces operating beyond the narrow limits of local trade and industry, the tendencies that have been described found a wider field of activity than that supplied by the rivalries of merely local organizations. In falling back upon an alliance with a privileged local industry, the town draper became the rallying point of a national opposition to free trade. The drapers of Shrewsbury, for example, besides attempting to exclude the local mercers, engaged in a long but fruitless struggle to prevent the London merchants sending their agents into Wales to buy up the white cloth which would otherwise have passed into the Shrewsbury market and supplied materials for the finishing industries of the town [3]. Such a new combination of local trade and industry against the free development of a wider commerce provides a natural explanation for much that might seem mere ignorant prejudice or fanciful theory in the views of contemporary writers on social and economic questions; and especially serves to throw light upon their attitude to

opposition to free trade

[1] *Harleian MSS.* 2354, 37–47. Cf. the case of John Grinder of Coventry, in 1424, Harris, *Life in an old English town*, p. 275.

[2] *Documents inédits, Archives législatives de Reims*, ii. 570 n. A similar case in Languedoc is noted in Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières* 1901, ii. p. 272 n. 9; and one in Marseilles in 1744, ii. 455 n. 3.

[3] *Privy Council Register*, May 2, 11, 16, Aug. 31, Sept. 17, 1613, and May 23, 1619.

the merchant class. The recommendations that the old handicrafts should be fostered, and new ones planted in the towns, and that the country industry should be placed under the due control of the town authority, found a perfectly natural corollary in suggestions for limiting the ill-advised activity of the merchant[1], to which indeed the economic evils of the time were in no small degree attributed. It was not merely the 'merchantys which cary out thynges necessary to the use of our pepul and bring in agayn vayn Tryfullys and conceytys only for the folysch pastyme and pleasure of man[2]' who fell under condemnation, the merchant staplers, who had been chiefly engaged in the export of raw material, were fast giving place to their rivals the merchant adventurers, who were largely concerned with the export of cloth; yet the pamphleteer of the period looked upon the adventurer with feelings scarcely less hostile than those with which he regarded the stapler.

Popular outcry against merchant class

Not only was the merchants' calling regarded as drawing off the most promising artificers to swell the ranks of an unproductive class which made its profit out of the necessities and misfortunes of the rest of the country[3], it was actually asserted that the increase in the number of merchants tended to lower the price of the cloth which they exported, and so inflicted a loss upon the manufacturer[4]. Such a statement becomes intelligible when it is realized that a large number of the new merchants would naturally turn their attention to the profitable field presented by the country manufacture, and in this manner accentuate the competition already severely felt by the towns. It must not be thought, however, that the merchants were attached to free trade as a matter of principle. In their larger sphere of operations they were as eager for privilege and monopoly as the local trader was in his more restricted sphere. The London merchants, for instance, made two unsuccessful attempts, in 1575 and 1638, to compel the Norwich drapers who came to London to bring their cloth to Blackwell Hall instead of selling it direct to the foreign merchants. But the very fact that their sphere of operations was a larger one gave the merchants engaged in the export trade as a class an interest in establishing and preserving freedom of trade, both as against the maintenance of local privilege,

Industrial capital begins to demand protection

[1] Lamond, *Discourse of the Common Weal*, pp. 125–31.
[2] *England in the reign of Henry VIII* (E.E.T.S.), Starkey's *Dialogue*, p. 172.
[3] Lamond, *Discourse*, p. 32; Pauli, pp. 69, 74.
[4] Pauli, p. 33.

and also against the attempt to force upon the foreign market the finished and dyed English cloth, for which there was little or no demand. At a time, however, when the artificial fostering of industry was an accepted maxim of state, and was supported by numerous and influential local interests, it was inevitable that mercantile capital should be found ready to exploit the protective policy if the Crown would grant the necessary monopoly. 'Ther be marchant men,' says Cardinal Pole in Starkey's *Dialogue*, which was written for the edification of Henry VIII in 1538, 'that by the helpe of the prynce wyl undertake in few yerys to bryng clothyng to as grete perfectyon as hyt ys in other partys, wych yf hyt were doune, hyt schold be the gretyst bunfyte to increase the ryches of England that might be devysed[1].' But a systematic attempt to carry out this policy was not authorized till the reign of James I, and this will be described in a subsequent chapter.

[1] *England in the reign of Henry VIII*, p. 173.

CHAPTER IV

THE ELIZABETHAN COMPANY

I

Craft gild replaced by Elizabethan company

We have hitherto been following, as far as the latter half of the sixteenth century, the gradual adaptation of the handicraft gild to the needs of a wider and more complex environment. It is now time to examine in some detail the structure and working of the industrial organizations which were the result of this process. The London livery companies from the time of Elizabeth onwards will supply us with examples of a development which, as we have seen, was common to the larger industries throughout Western Europe, and which found perhaps an even more complete and logical expression in some continental organizations than in those of England.

Productive and distributive functions begin to separate

The essence of the new economic situation lay in the separation of the distributive from the productive function. The business faculty which was needed to keep the larger industries in touch with a distant market had been increasingly specialized by a distinct class of traders, whilst the master craftsman had been left to confine his attention to the management of production. Each of these functions required capital for its performance, but the larger capital and the fuller opportunities of utilizing it were generally to be found on the side of those who exercised the distributive function.

This change obscured in the gradual adaptation of old organizations

This differentiation of classes was, however, a very gradual process. The former craftsman, who had become a merchant deriving his main profit from dealing in other craftsmen's wares, often continued to keep journeymen and apprentices of his own, as he was entitled to do by his practical experience; whilst the small working master, who was dependent for the most part on the business faculty of the merchant to provide him with a market, did not willingly abandon the right of occasionally trading on his own account. It was to these two transitional types, which, while representing opposite tendencies, had spheres of interest and of activity which largely overlapped each other, that the bulk of the members of the larger industrial organizations of the sixteenth century belonged.

Though the two functions were in process of separation

from each other, the mere trader and the mere craftsman were still the exception rather than the rule. In the majority of cases both functions were combined in every variety of proportion; and the proportion varied not only from one individual to another, but in the same individual from year to year. Between two interests so closely intertwined it is not surprising that the conflict was slow to come to a clear issue, nor that the expression which it had effectually found by the middle of the sixteenth century in the constitutions of the older industrial organizations was of an indirect character and easily eludes casual observation.

But is revealed in the constitution of those newly created which recognize separate classes of traders and craftsmen, e.g. town clothing corporations: Chester, 1578, London skinners, 1564,

If, however, we take some of the organizations which were newly created or entirely recast about this time, the results effected elsewhere by silent and cumulative changes are presented at a glance. The new clothing corporations erected by Act of Parliament or royal charter in the towns are examples of this class; but precise details of their internal economy are too often wanting. At Chester, however, in 1579, the Drapers' and Hosiers' Company obtained a charter from which it appears that there were two distinct classes within the corporation, the clothiers who made the cloth, and the drapers who had the sole right to sell it by retail, and that neither was to be allowed to meddle with the other's trade[1]. A still clearer case is that of the Skinners' Company of London. In 1564 the grey tawyers, who had long been employed by them, were amalgamated with the Skinners' Company upon terms which exactly reflect the differentiation of function already described. The tawyers were to be free of the Skinners' Company; and no skinner was to put out work to others who were not freemen. The tawyers were to be paid for their work within thirteen days of delivery, in accordance with a price list which was embodied in the articles of the agreement; and no tawyer was to act as a middleman between other tawyers and the skinners. Finally, two tawyers were to be appointed to take part in the search of the trade[2]. An illustration from France carries us still further along the path of regulated differentiation. The silk-weavers of Toulouse, who were incorporated in 1552, were governed by regulations based on the inquiries of a commission sent to investigate the methods followed in other towns, a procedure, it may be observed, not unknown in England at the same period; and not only were the rates to be paid for work given out fixed as between merchant and small master, but it was likewise determined what proportion the

Toulouse silk-weavers, 1552

[1] *Harl. MSS.* 1996, 9. [2] *City of London Repertories*, 15. fo. 432.

masters should pay to their journeymen and to the women who were employed in various subsidiary processes[1].

The London company: vague limits of its control over industry,

Before inquiring to what extent the new type of association revealed in these examples was represented in the London companies at the time of Elizabeth, it is necessary to take into account a circumstance which materially diminished the control over industry possessed by the companies at that period. By the custom of London they could claim no exclusive right to the trade they represented. As a general rule it was impossible to prevent a citizen who was free of any company from carrying on the trade of any other company[2], if it seemed to his interest to do so.

The master and wardens of each company claimed the right to search all who occupied their trade, and had a real power of annoying those who resisted their authority; but the limits of that authority were vague and shifting, and might be frequently ignored by a powerful or persistent outsider. Against this state of things the handicraft section of the various companies were constantly protesting. They wished to bring all those who exercised a trade under the control of a single company representing that trade. But the indefiniteness of the existing system, with the outlets it afforded to free enterprise and the facilities it offered for the transfer of capital, was too convenient to the mercantile interest to permit of any decided alteration.

illustrated by the companies interested in cloth,

We cannot, therefore, expect to find in the companies a compact and exclusive representation of the several trades whose names they bore. At the time of Elizabeth, for example, no less than three of the greater companies had a large interest in the cloth trade. The Clothworkers' Company, which had originally been founded to maintain the manufacturing interest as against the trading interest of the Drapers' Company, had itself gradually fallen under the direction of the merchant class, but its exclusive right to regulate the industry was challenged by the Merchant Taylors' Company, which contained a large body of merchant employers. The famous Sir Thomas White, founder of St. John's College, Oxford, who made his fortune in the cloth trade, and perpetuated his memory in twenty-four English towns by an endowment for the encouragement of

[1] A. du Bourg, *Tableau de l'ancienne organisation du travail dans le midi de la France*, p. 125–31.

[2] See Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. p. 620. The case there quoted does not of itself establish my point, as the weavers were admittedly on a special footing; I give the impression derived from a pretty wide inspection of records; cf. *Index to Remembrancia*, p. 103.

the leading national industry, was a member not of the Clothworkers', but of the Merchant Taylors' Company[1], and the two companies continued to be more or less rivals during the whole period of their industrial importance.

and from the history of the haberdashers

Another instance showing how little the natural mobility of capital was restricted by the traders' membership of a particular company is to be found in the history of the haberdashers. Originally dealing, among other articles of foreign luxury, in imported hats and caps, the haberdashers came by a natural transition to find employment for the home industry in these articles; and this led to the absorption of the hatters' and cappers' crafts by the Haberdashers' Company, in 1500. But the small master required the assistance of capital, not only in disposing of his product, but also in procuring his material, and accordingly the haberdashers began to import large quantities of the Spanish wool of which the new felts were made, and to sell it in small quantities to the feltmakers. From dealing in Spanish wool to dealing in English was but a short step to take. In 1577 a great outcry was raised by the cloth trade against the excessive exportation of wool. No one was allowed to buy up wool for export without a special licence, and the holder of such a licence was accused of abusing his position by appointing a number of deputies, among whom there were mentioned a haberdasher, two merchant taylors, and two leather-sellers[2].

Barriers between traders of different companies tend to disappear

This incident serves to illustrate the process by which the members of the merchant class in the various larger companies were brought, by the natural expansion of their business, upon common ground. Through the intermediate link of the cloth-making industry on the one hand or of the felt-making industry on the other, the merchant taylor and the haberdasher came together as competitors in the wool market; nor was the connexion of the two leather-sellers with the same branch of trade a mere accident. That the trader who gathered the skins from the sheep-owners should take to bargaining for the wool was an obvious economy, and as a matter of fact it was the country glovers, amongst whom the development of industry had produced a class of merchant employers, who were specially accused of engrossing wool. In this way the barriers which separated the merchants engaged in one trade from those engaged in another were constantly tending to disappear, and were only preserved by the force of the vested interest

[1] Clode, *Early history of Merchant Taylors*, Pt. II, *passim*.
[2] *State Papers Dom., Elizabeth*, cxiv. 37–9.

in the partial monopoly enjoyed by the companies, backed by the natural conservatism of the small master who could not so readily change his occupation.

Loose relation of trader and craftsman within the companies

Another drawback to the stability of these larger forms of organization lay in the looseness of the economic relation between the two classes brought together by them. In some cases, no doubt, the small master had only to deal with one set of capitalists, who delivered to him the material, and paid him for the labour bestowed upon it, and under these conditions the problem of regulation was simplified; but in many other domestic industries the small master himself bought the materials and sold the finished article; and, as he generally required the assistance of a middleman in each of these transactions, there were two sets of capitalists, upon either or both of which he might become economically dependent. Thus the glovers and the parchment-makers had become subordinated to the leather-sellers, upon whom they depended for the supply of their material; but they are also spoken of as being the workmen of the haberdashers and the stationers who took their wares wholesale.

General prevalence of the loose type thus qualified

Bearing these reservations in mind, we may regard most, if not all, of those London companies which were connected at the time of Elizabeth with the larger industries as approximating to the type of organization exemplified by the Skinners' Company, which was almost as far removed from the pure handicraft system on the one hand as it was from the factory system on the other. The governing bodies of these companies, if not exclusively composed of traders, were dominated by the trading interest; but they were bound by their charter and ordinances to maintain the protective regulations which were the product of the handicraft tradition; and these were further safeguarded by the representation of the industrial element in a yeomanry organization, which, if it failed to secure the attention of the corporation to its grievances, might appeal with more effect to the watchful and increasingly active authority of the Crown.

Recapitulation of cases: drapers,

It may be well to recall the cases already met with of companies that had entered upon this phase of development. The Drapers' Company, which had been amongst the earliest to do so, and had controlled the cloth-finishing crafts before they obtained separate incorporation, had probably by this time relinquished the greater part of its industrial interests and occupied itself mainly with commerce. Of the other greater companies

skinners, goldsmiths, haberdashers, clothworkers, merchant taylors, ironmongers, sadlers, cutlers, leathersellers

we have had unmistakable evidence in regard to the Skinners, the Goldsmiths, the Haberdashers, and the Clothworkers; and we shall shortly have similar evidence concerning the Merchant Taylors. The Ironmongers may very probably be added to the same group, which will thus include seven of the twelve greater companies, the other five not being directly concerned with industry. Amongst the lesser companies the Saddlers and the Cutlers had, as we have seen in a previous chapter, begun to pass under the new conditions before the close of the fourteenth century; and in the latter half of the fifteenth, the Leathersellers, by the absorption of a number of leather crafts, became a body of merchant employers and small masters exactly similar to the Haberdashers. But now that we are approaching the end of the sixteenth century the list may be considerably extended. The Blacksmiths' Company absorbed the spurriers in 1571, and this fact, taken with their attempt a little later on to get control of the rising industry of the clockmakers, proves them to have become conformed to the new type[1]. The Girdlers, with whom the pinners were amalgamated in 1568, may certainly be taken as an example of the same development[2]; and so very probably may the Joiners, who obtained in 1612 rights of search over quite a number of crafts working in wood; and who were about the same time successful in repudiating the claim put forward by their yeomanry, that the executive functions of the company ought not to be undertaken by any but craftsmen[3]. The steady progress of the Pewterers' Company in the same direction, during the sixteenth century, is amply demonstrated by the change in the character of the yeomanry already referred to, by the frequent mention of work given out by one member to another, by the determination of piecework rates, and by the formation of special bodies of craftsmen dependent for employment on the traders, such as 'spoon-makers,' 'lid-makers,' 'hammermen,' &c.[4].

New cases: blacksmiths, girdlers, joiners, pewterers

Stationers' relations to printers

But perhaps the most interesting example of all is furnished by the newly incorporated Company of Stationers with its dependent craft of printers. 'In the time of Henry VIII,' says Barker the Queen's printer, in an account drawn up in 1583, 'there were but fewe Printers, and those of good credit and competent wealthe, at which tyme and

[1] W. Hazlitt, *Livery Companies*, p. 372. [2] Ibid., p. 511.
[3] *Index to Remembrancia*, pp. 95–6; Hazlitt, p. 544.
[4] C. Welch, *History of the Pewterers' Company*, i. 289–90.

before there was an other sort of men that were writers, lymners of Bookes, and dyvers things for the Church and other uses called Stationers; which have and partly to this daye do use and buy their bookes in grosse of the saide Printers to bynde them up and sell them in their shops. . . . In King Edward the Sixt dayes Printers and Printing began greatly to increase; but the provision of letter and many other thinges belonging to Printing was so exceeding chargeable that most of those Printers were driven through necessitye to compound before with the Booksellers at so lowe value as the Printers themselves were most tymes small gayners and often losers.' After referring to the grant of a charter to the stationers by Queen Mary, giving the members of their company a monopoly of printing, and its confirmation by Queen Elizabeth, Barker declares that 'the Booksellers, having growne the greater and wealthier number, have nowe the best copies and keepe no printinge howse neither beare any charge of letter or other furniture but onely pay for the workmanship;' whilst on the other hand he sees 'the artificer printer growing every day more and more unable to provide letter and other furniture requisite for the execution of any good work[1].'

The cases enumerated represent a very considerable proportion of the London industries of that period; and there can be no doubt that the list would be more extensive if our knowledge of the economic history of the companies were not so limited. All that we do know of such companies as the Weavers[2], the Founders, and the Carpenters[3], supports the presumption that they too were examples of the development which has been described. We are justified therefore in taking this new species of association, which in so many cases had displaced the craft gild, as the typical form of Elizabethan industrial organization.

We ought probably to add others,

weavers, founders, carpenters

Before we proceed to examine its working in detail, it will be instructive to glance for a moment at the conditions existing in the Parisian corporations during this period. We have already had occasion to point out the close similarity exhibited by the cutlers', the saddlers', and the drapers' organization in the fourteenth century to that of the contemporaries of the same trades in London; and we have seen that the Paris Company of Mercers, like the haber-

Parallel cases from Paris:

cutlers, sadlers, drapers,

mercers,

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, xlviii. 82, reprinted in *Archaeologia*, xxv. p. 100.

[2] See below, pp. 204–10.

[3] Williams, *Annals of Founders*, p. 24, and Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, p. 180, note 160.

dashers and leather-sellers of London, had come to perform the function of merchant employer to a number of handicrafts, without, however, absorbing their organizations as in the case of the London companies If we examine the situation at the end of the sixteenth century we find the

skinners, parallelisms no less striking. The ordinances of the skinners of Paris in 1583, for instance, like those of the London skinners in 1564, recognize the existence of the two distinct classes of merchants and craftsmen in their ranks; and they concede to the craftsmen, what the working skinners of London were at this very time seeking to secure for themselves, the right of electing one of the two wardens annually

breeches-makers, chosen [1]. The breeches-makers of Paris, to take another example, who corresponded to the merchant taylors of London, had apparently acquired like them a large interest in the cloth manufacture, and this led in 1575 to their amalgamation with the drapers [2]. The joint organization thus formed had the same control of the cloth manufacture in Paris as the merchant taylors and the clothworkers shared between them in London. The purely mercantile character of the governing body of the Clothworkers' Company led in 1559 to their appointing eight assistants to search the handicraft on their behalf; and precisely the same cause was assigned in 1583 for the appointment of the same number of assistants by the Paris company to perform the

girdlers same function. The girdlers of Paris, like those of London, were a mixed body of merchant employers and craftsmen, and their ordinances of 1595 provided that of the three officers to be annually elected, two should be shopkeepers engaged in the merchandise connected with the girdlers' trade, and one should be a working householder engaged in forging and filing the ironwork of the girdlers [3]. Examples from other industries might be readily multiplied to show that the type of organization with which we are concerned was as prevalent at Paris as in London.

Parallels from other continental towns Nor need the examples be confined to Paris. Every fresh contribution to the industrial history of the French, German, and Italian cities furnishes additional illustrations of a development which was as widespread as the progress of industry itself.

It will be sufficient to cite two instances, furnished by localities which still maintain a European reputation for

Lyons silk industry their wares. The silk industry of Lyons, known formerly in France as *La grande fabrique*, had come to be of great

[1] Lespinasse, *Métiers de Paris*, iii. p. 376, Art. 8.
[2] Ibid., p. 171. [3] Ibid., p. 396, Art. 28.

importance in the seventeenth century, and had received an elaborate body of regulations from Colbert in 1667; but the distinction between merchant and craftsman was not formally recognized in its constitution till 1700. By that time there were three separate classes engaged in the industry, the merchant employers, the small masters who worked on materials delivered to them, and a dwindling class of masters who still worked on their own account; but the merchants had gradually monopolized the direction of the organization. The ordinances made in 1700, and subsequently, recognized the separate classes, and attempted to give each its due share of representation. During the eighteenth century the central government was frequently called upon to readjust the balance between the contending interests; and the disputes between the craftsmen and the merchants, accentuated by the political crisis, furnished some striking episodes in the revolutions of 1789 and 1830[1].

Solingen cutlery trade

An interesting German parallel to this is supplied by the sword and cutlery manufacture at Solingen in the Duchy of Berg. The products of this industry had been famous in mediaeval times throughout Western Europe, and a class of merchants had sprung up in connexion with each branch of the manufacture, but especially in connexion with the finishing processes, to manage the export trade. Without being clearly separated from the craftsmen, these trading members were acquiring a predominant position in the gilds during the seventeenth century. In 1689 a determined stand was made with the support of the government for the preservation of the handicraft status. The merchants were separated from the craftsmen, and excluded from holding office in the gilds. Their relations with the industry, and their management of the export trade, were carefully restricted with a view to preventing the exploitation of the small master; but they had reserved to them, on the other hand, the first right of buying swords or other cutlery for export. The struggle of the traders and the master craftsmen, over the vital issue of the piecework rates, was constantly renewed during the eighteenth century; and the efforts of the authorities to devise a permanent basis for mutual arrangement lasted through the Napoleonic wars, and well on into the century following[2].

[1] Levasseur, *Histoire*, ii. pp. 470–1, 648, 687, 740–3–9, and Schmoller, *Recht und Verbände der Hausindustrie*, pp. 15–19, in his *Jahrbuch* for 1891.

[2] A. Thun, *Die Industrie am Niederrhein*, ii. pp. 7–43, in Schmoller, *Forschungen* for 1879.

II

The Clothworkers' Company of London a typical example

The records of the Clothworkers' Company, together with numerous references in the State Papers, supply a fairly complete illustration of the constitution and working of a typical London company at this period. Of its origin and of the early phases of its history a good deal has been said in a previous chapter, and it was there seen that by the middle of the sixteenth century the livery and the yeomanry of the company had come to be identified respectively with the trading and industrial elements. That is the broad essential feature of the situation; but it will now be desirable to take a closer view of the composition of the company; and fortunately the details which lend substance and life to a description can be supplied from an account which, though it belongs to the succeeding reign, can doubtless be applied with little modification to the time of Elizabeth.

Three classes within the company: (1) the craftsmen,

According to this document there were three principal classes to be distinguished amongst the members of the Clothworkers' Company actually engaged in the cloth trade. The rank and file consisted of master craftsmen, the fullers and shearmen. These were generally set at work by the other members; but when this kind of employment failed, some, who had a little money or credit, would 'buy a cloth or more to set their people on worke and sell the same again ... unto drapers and merchants.' Another sort made it their sole business to buy unfinished cloth from the country clothier, and to employ the fullers and shearmen in finishing it, after which they sold it to the merchants for export. This class was 'needful to help the clothier at a dead market, the handy trade to worke at a bad time, and the merchant upon his present occasion.' 'The next and last sort,' continues the account we are quoting, 'are those which mantle, fould, put in buckram, and pack all such clothes as are dyed and dressed in London, as also those which come out of the Countrie ready dyed and dressed, of which sort are all Suffolk clothes, Stroud waters, Coventry, and some others. In thees people very great trust is committed both by the clothiers and marchant, for the clothier sendeth upp his clothes to the hall where he payes his duetyes and himself cannot stay untill the market serveth him best, but leaveth his clothes to the care and order of thees clothworkers who have in their charge some tymes 6 monethes or 12 monethes for a markett five hundred or a thousand clothes.... And the marchant

(2) the merchant employers,

(3) the exporters

giveth order to him likewise to cause the clothier to make such and such clothes to dye such and such collours. . . . Also if the clothier at any tyme want money, the Clothworker is the instrument to furnish him, and if the marchant be unknown to the clothier and would have credit, the clothworker doth advise him of his sufficiency. . . . Generally the merchant payeth the Clothier himself or giveth him bills, if it be for tyme, so that theis people gett only for their work[1].'

Diversity of interests in the company

This classification does not exhaust the membership of the company. Apart from the members who followed entirely different trades, there was a considerable body of retailers. On one occasion we learn that twenty-four of the householders who 'occupied buying and selling of fustians and silks' were called together at the request of the Lord Mayor and advised to endeavour to sell better pennyworths. But, to confine our attention to the part played by the company in the wholesale cloth trade, it is evident from the above account how varied were the interests which had to be balanced against each other in its counsels. The interests of the agents who supplied the export trade were almost identical with those of the merchant adventurer. They evidently derived as much profit from the country cloth industry as from that of London; and, as the trade in finished cloth was much less extensive than that in unfinished, it was natural that they should transfer their attention to the latter when the market for the former was dull.

Conflict between trading and handicraft elements

It was probably therefore not without reason that these wealthier members of the Clothworkers' Company were suspected of evading the law which limited, in the interest of the artisan clothworker, the exportation of unfinished cloth. Even in the early days of the company this antagonism of interest had led to the expression of bloodthirsty sentiments. On this question of policy the other class of trading clothworkers, who bought the country cloth for the purpose of getting it finished, must have largely shared the feeling of the small masters whom they employed, although their differences with them on other matters might at times be even more acute. Not that the line between employer and employed could have been very sharply drawn. Apart from the fact that both shearmen and fullers occasionally bought cloth to set themselves at work, we learn from the Clothworkers' Court Book that

[1] *State Papers Dom., James I*, cxxxiii. No. 36.

many of the shearmen 'made prices' with the merchant for both the finishing processes, so that the fullers were placed in the position of receiving employment from them. Between the smallest master and the largest capitalist engaged in the industry there must have been many intermediate degrees in which the functions of merchant and manufacturer were blended in varying proportions. At the end of the sixteenth century we still find some of the wealthy members of the court of assistants and of the livery spoken of as being of the handicraft.

represented by the livery and yeomanry respectively

But it is clear that long before this the 'handicraft' element had become almost completely identified with the small masters who formed the rank and file of the yeomanry, and who were no longer able to secure officers of their own class. In 1543 it had been proposed to confine the yeomanry to the journeyman class, and to choose four journeymen annually as wardens. Sixteen years later we find it recorded that, 'forasmuch as this yere the fower wardens of the yomanry be merchaunts and not skylfull yn the handycrafte,' eight assistants are appointed 'to execute their authority concerning the handycrafte[1].' The great change which had taken place in so short a time was an indication, not only of the rapid increase of wealth in the company, but also of the complete triumph of the 'domestic system.' The upper ranks of the company, which had been formerly filled with well-to-do master craftsmen who were also traders, were now monopolized by commission agents and merchant employers who had little or no practical knowledge of the industry.

This separation of classes illustrated

The extent to which this separation of the handicraft element from, and its subordination to, the mercantile element, had proceeded, is made evident by the tenor of some negotiations which were carried on between the Clothworkers' Company and the Merchant Taylors in 1566. The Clothworkers' Company were promoting a measure in Parliament which would, among other provisions, have given them authority over all those engaged in the London industry; and as the merchant taylors had a number of merchant employers in their livery and of small masters in their yeomanry engaged in cloth finishing, they offered a strong opposition to the Bill. In the 'Commons' Committee' it was proposed that both companies should have full powers of search over the handicraft. Whereupon the master and wardens of the Clothworkers' Company 'offered rather to

by the offer of the

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Jan. 22, 2 Elizabeth, 3.

surrender and deliver upp all the poore handycraftes men of the clothworkers to the company of the Merchant Taylors.' The Lord Mayor, on the matter being referred to him, commanded that 'the said handycraftesmen's opynyon thereon shulde be knowen and answer brought to the gilde hall.' All the householders of the handicraft were therefore warned, and the most part to the number of seven score and upwards having appeared, they were asked 'whether they wold be contented to be sett over to the Merchant Taylors or not, at which mocion some of them semed to be skante well pleased, but yet notwithstanding yn the end the said householders together with the assistents now present fully agreed and consented to stande to such offers and other orders as the Master and Wardens have offered and shall conclude and agree upon[1].'

cloth-workers in 1566

The offer having therefore been formally communicated, the merchant taylors came before the Lord Mayor three days later and made answer that 'they were contented to take and receive all the handycraftesmen of this company, so that they maye have a competent some of goods and landes to relieve them withall, and that no person within the citie of London or within thre myles compasse shall from henseforth worke any cloth, but onely they, and that from hensforth the said company of Merchant Taylors be not taxed or sessed at higher and greater impositions than they yn time past have been[2].' A number of articles drafted by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen to serve as a basis for the transfer were considered by the Clothworkers' Court to be drawn 'too streit.' The company's counsel were directed to draw up another set more satisfactory to them, and the master and wardens were authorized to conclude the matter if the substance of these articles were conceded[3]. A week later there was a committee appointed, consisting of four members from the upper rank of each of the two companies, and six representatives of the handicraft clothworkers, to consider the points in controversy, but after three days' deliberation they failed to come to an agreement[4]. In the end the Clothworkers' Company seem to have reconciled themselves to the first proposal for a mutual search, on condition that it extended to retailers as well as to craftsmen; but the matter continued to be a subject of lively dispute at intervals for more than a century afterwards.

to hand over the craftsmen to the merchant taylors

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Nov. 13, 1566.
[2] Ibid., Nov. 16, 1566.
[3] Ibid., Nov. 23, 1566.
[4] Ibid., Nov. 29, 1566.

Probable motives for the offer

It is difficult to tell what motives prompted the clothworkers' offer, or whether they seriously intended so complete an abandonment of their control over the industry as that asked for by the merchant taylors. But the point upon which the incident leaves no room for doubt is the separability and dependence of the handicraft element. The responsibility for the relief of the poverty of the artisan class seems to have been one of the main considerations, and it was bitterly asserted among the rank and file that the company had been willing to give five hundred pounds to get rid of them [1]. Perhaps also the merchant employers of the clothworkers were desirous of exchanging the obligations laid upon them by the handicraft traditions of their company for the comparative freedom hitherto enjoyed by the employers in the Merchant Taylors' Company.

The clothworkers undertake the regulation of the handicraft

At any rate, after the negotiations had broken down, things remained as they were; and in the course of the following year the ruling body of the clothworkers showed themselves quite prepared to take their relation to the industry in earnest. They inquired of their legal advisers whether they might, 'by force of their corporation, appoint six, eight, or ten persons of their company to view and search all clothes wrought within the company . . . such persons to take for every cloth a penny; also whether the Master and Wardeyns may make an order among themselves to bynde evry person of their owne companye not to presse or to deliver to their workemasters any clothe before every such cloth be searched and sealed.' The answer of the learned counsel was that the master and wardens 'should call before them all the handycraftesmen and take their consent and their handes, which consent would bind them [2].' Accordingly at the next meeting of the Court the 'whole companye of the handycraftesmen' were summoned and the articles concerning the search read to them. 'And they all with one voyce consented to evry of the said articles, and made humble request with wyllyng hertes, as they professed, that these said orders may be forthwith put yn execution with diligence, affirmyng the same orders to be profitable to them all.' A hundred and five members of the handicraft set their hands to the new regulations on this occasion, and the signatures of the rest, to the number of forty-two, were obtained a couple of days later. In addition to this, the names of fifty persons were set down 'who freely offered themselves to travayle

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Dec. 13, 1566.
[2] Ibid., Nov. 25, 1567.

and take paynes to see the saide orders duely put in execution without anything takyng for their paynes[1].'

Corporate unity realized by traders and craftsmen

The unanimity with which this system of inspection of all work done (not to be confused with the haphazard and often perfunctory procedure of the ordinary search) was agreed upon marks a distinct epoch in the history of industrial association. The implicit aim of the new type of organization, the harmonious co-operation of the two classes concerned in the domestic system, was in this instance realized. At a time when, as will shortly be seen, a number of similar combinations were on the point of breaking down, the merchants and the craftsmen of the Clothworkers' Company were achieving a basis for something like corporate unity, and in the course of the following century the two classes never entirely lost touch with each other.

mechanical improvements rejected

The capitalists of the company, as represented in the ruling body, showed no desire to encourage larger methods of production. In the second year of Elizabeth's reign the Court of Assistants had been waited upon by a Venetian inventor, who exhibited a labour-saving machine for the fulling of broad cloth, and offered to teach the company his 'feate of workmanship' for a consideration. But the opinion of 'certain of the company, being the most expert men,' who were brought in to see the device and allowed time to think it over, was that 'it wolde be a grete decay unto the companye, whereupon the M^r. and Wardens gave the said stranger grete thanks, and also xx^s in money towards his charge, and so parted[2].'

The apprenticeship question a crucial test of unity

The question as to the number of apprentices was always one of crucial importance in the domestic industries. As a member of his class the small master was in favour of limitation, and the interests of the journeyman ran strongly in the same direction. But there was always a tendency amongst the more prosperous and pushing masters, partly arising from a desire to extend their business and partly from a wish to secure cheap labour, to keep more than the permitted number of apprentices, and even to employ boys who had not been bound. When the small masters of any trade were strongly organized, the rule, limiting each master to two apprentices, was usually enforced. But where the final authority lay in the hands of the trading class, this restriction, along with others made in the interests of the artisan, was often ignored by the larger employers.

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Nov. 29, 1567.
[2] Ibid., June 21, 2 Elizabeth.

Journeymen's objections to an increase,

The attitude of the Clothworkers' Court of Assistants in regard to this matter affords therefore an excellent criterion of the extent to which the various classes composing the company felt themselves bound together by a real unity of interests; more especially as it was the journeyman class, now deprived of all definite representation in the company, which was most deeply concerned. As the journeyman was not allowed to set up for himself till he had acquired an amount of capital equal to two years' wages, it was natural he should object to having the available amount of employment lessened by the creation of an unlimited number of apprentices. The justice of the principle underlying this objection was implied in an order of the Court of Assistants made in 1568. Whilst on the one hand no journeyman was to keep an apprentice as long as he remained a journeyman, the householder on the other hand was limited for the first three years to one apprentice, after which he might keep two, or if he had been warden, three [1]. In 1574, the journeymen petitioned the Court against a number of the masters who were transgressing this rule, complaining that, for want of employment in their trade, some were constrained to carry a basket, tray or shovel, while others were driven to beg or steal [2].

supported by a majority of masters

Three years afterwards, when there were renewed complaints, some of the masters desired to have the number of apprentices allowed to each increased from two to three; apparently instancing the example of some of the Merchant Taylors' Company. All the company of the handicraft was therefore called together, and the matter tried by show of hands, when it appeared that the whole company, except four or five at most, were of the mind that 'the keeping of two apprentices only and not above was most best and reasonable'; and two of the leading members of the company promised to bring the Merchant Taylors to consent to the same rule. The Court of Assistants proceeded to give force to the agreement by taking in hand the offending masters, who do not appear to have formed more than a seventh or eighth part of the whole number, and most of them proved amenable to friendly remonstrance [3].

The wages question divides journeymen and masters

In so far then as the interests of the journeymen were shared by the 'handicraft' at large, they might still look for some degree of protection to the authorities of the company. The apprenticeship question was a case of this kind. Whether the regulation of the contract made between

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Oct. 1568.
[2] Ibid., April 23, 1574. [3] Ibid., Sept. 20, Nov. 5, Dec. 10, 1577.

master and servant came under the same category is at least doubtful, especially as we find the company exhibiting most anxiety in the matter at a time when the demand for labour appears to have exceeded the supply. In February and March, 1559, a number of journeymen had been brought to book for taking service with persons of other companies, when members of their own were in want of workmen. In April, all the journeymen of the company 'were warned and had exhortation given them to be of honest behaviour and to have regard of their selves and respect to the welthe of the company, and to beware with whom they dyd make any covenante for their service[1].' And in December of the same year all the householders 'had warning to hyer their journeymen ageynst the next yere ensuinge yn due tyme while they maye have them, and that all such covenants as any of them shulde make with their saide Journeymen, to cause yt to be regestred yn this house that yt maye evydently appare to all tymes hereafter who be yncon-venient and who be not[2].'

Elizabethan legislation aims at uniformity

In aiming thus at securing uniformity in the conditions of employment, the company was anticipating the course of national policy as embodied only four years later in the Statute of Apprentices. By that epoch-making piece of legislation, Parliament, or Elizabeth's ministers, sought to give fixity to the status of the various classes of the working population, to ensure greater regularity to the course of employment, and to bring wages into a steadier and more equitable relation to prices. Leaving aside the important questions as to how far these objects were practicable, and whether the means adopted were likely to secure their realization, it is interesting to note the immediate and definite effects of the Act in a particular case where the previous conditions are tolerably well known to us. The first clause of the statute following the preamble provided that servants in certain employments, amongst which were included the various branches of the cloth industry, should be hired by the year; and a subsequent clause required that the rates of wages should be yearly determined by the magistrates in each locality. At the command of the Lord Mayor, therefore, the master and wardens of the cloth-workers called the whole company before them to inquire what wages they gave their journeymen, and what wages they thought meet to give in future. It appeared from the statements of the masters that the rates then paid varied

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, April 17, 1 Elizabeth.
[2] Ibid., Dec. 5, 2 Elizabeth.

considerably. Some journeymen received two shillings a week 'broken and whole'; others two shillings and sixpence a week; whilst of those paid by the year some received four pounds, some five, and some six. But now, the report concludes, 'in respect of the Act of Parliament lately provided, they have agreed to give every Journeyman for his wages by yere v^{li}, yf it shall please your Lordshipp and mastershypp to allowe the same[1].'

and strengthens the hands of the masters;

The effect therefore of the Statute of Apprentices in this case, if the masters' report is to be trusted, was the enforcement of a uniform average rate of wages throughout the trade, although it is to be noticed that there were more rates levelled down than there were levelled up. The elimination of unfair competition by this means might benefit the worst paid workmen, as well as the general body of the masters; but as long as the opinions of the latter only were consulted by the authorities, the rate fixed upon could not be expected to give satisfaction to the journeymen as a whole. In short, wherever the interests of the masters and those of the journeymen were divergent, the new legislation tended to strengthen the hands of the masters, who had all the advantages of organization on their side.

the journeyman class is reduced to dependence;

The journeymen had lost all effective share in the yeomanry organization, and the only modes of common action open to them were either to appeal over the heads of the masters to the Court of Assistants, or to form an illegal combination and to strike. The second of these methods was ineffectually resorted to as early as 1565, when a number of journeymen 'having unlawfully consulted and assembled themselves together and absented themselves from their masters' service,' four of their ringleaders were arrested and committed to ward, 'and after they had lyen there iiij dayes, upon their humble submyssion were discharged[2].' The comparative helplessness of the journeymen in the hands of an organization in which they had no real share was equally displayed when they appealed, as they did in 1577, for the intervention of the Court of Assistants. They had complained of lack of employment, but they were sharply told that 'the greatest faulte and lett was in themselves for neglecting of their dueties in their duetifull service, both in comynge to worke, and in doinge their worke for their meate and drinke. Therefore they were moved if they woulde be contented to come to their worke

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, June 9, 1563.
[2] Ibid., July 7, 1565.

at such time as they ought to do by the ordynance of this house, and to do their work justly and truly as they ought to doo, and to be content with such reasonable fare, so it be sweete and holdsome for man's bodie, as the householders . . . shall provide for them.' When the journeymen had expressed their willingness to comply with these terms the householders were in their turn privately called in, and after long debating of the matter a committee was appointed 'to peruse the company through for the placing of the said journeymen upon such bonds and conditions as is above recited, and upon such wages as they canne[1].'

small masters' interests impartially considered

So far then as the regulation of industry was concerned, the small masters had little to complain of in the rule of the Court of Assistants, although probably the only representatives of industry on that body were the merchant employers. Cases of friction between these two classes occur, of course, from time to time, but the interests of the craftsmen seem to have generally received a fair amount of consideration. A difference of this kind, for instance, was constantly recurring between the fustian shearers and the mercers dealing in fustians who were accused of disregarding the ordinances regulating this branch of the industry. A number of special orders were issued for the protection of the handicraft. No master was to keep more than two pair of shears; and no workman was to follow that branch of the trade who had not been brought up to it[2]. Markers of fustians were appointed; and measures taken against the use of irons and 'other deceiptful instruments or engyns[3].' In 1591 matters came to a crisis, and the whole question concerning the validity and force of the statutes for fustians and the ordinances of the house was debated with 'longe arguments and great reasoning' before the Court of Assistants, both parties being represented by learned counsel. The counsel for the workmen argued 'that although the saide Statute (being made long since) and soe in tyme things and devices are altered, and not suche stricte and apte wordes are therein as might have been . . . so that in some parte for that purpose it is thought imperfect. Yet the said ordinances . . . were very good and available to bynde all the companie. . . . Yet the other counsel did somewhat inpugne the same. Whereupon it was thought meete that the same shoulde be putt in practize by some of the Offenders . . . if they may be met withall[4].' The result

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Oct. 1, 1577.
[2] Ibid., July 27, 1563.
[3] Ibid., Nov. 3, 1590.
[4] Ibid., April 19, 1591.

of the appeal to the law courts, which was evidently intended, does not appear, but the glimpse thus afforded of the inner working of the organization cannot be said to leave the impression that it was entirely one-sided or oppressive.

Real dividing line in company was between commercial and industrial interests,

The division which most seriously threatened the unity of the company was not perhaps that between the different classes concerned in the industry, but that between a combination of these various interests on the one hand, and the purely mercantile interest on the other. Many of the most influential members of the company were, as we have seen, commission agents engaged in supplying the export trade; and as the foreign demand for white or unfinished English cloth was much greater than that for the finished article, it is very improbable that they ever confined themselves to dealing in the latter. While therefore as leading members of the Clothworkers' Company they were bound to do their best to secure legislative protection on behalf of the industry, they were not likely to be over zealous in carrying out any law which hindered the free course of their own trade. The Bill which had led to the negotiations with the Merchant Taylors' Company was composed of two sections, one dealing with the regulation of the industry, and the other requiring that one cloth in every ten exported should be finished, and that no Suffolk or Kent cloth should be exported unfinished. Although the attempt to carry the first portion through Parliament had broken down, the clothworkers still persevered with the second[1], and it became law in 1566[2]. In February, 1568, six of the London handicraft were petitioning the Privy Council on behalf of all those using 'the manuell occupation of clothworkyng within this realm of England' for further powers to search all warehouses. 'The Act passed last Session,' they declare, 'cannot be duly put in execution because the merchants . . . doo in their own warehouses privilye packe up their clothes[3].'

as to the export of unfinished cloth

The handicraft petitions Privy Council to appoint a Packer

In 1575 the grievance still remained, and had become a source of serious difference of feeling in the company. Four members of the handicraft were brought before the Court of Assistants for having, without the consent of the Court, presented a petition to the Privy Council, 'wherein they have very slaunderously touched and complayned of this companie as touching their rulers and superiors.' This time the handicraft desired a new officer called a Packer to be appointed, to have the oversight of the packing of the

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Dec. 7, 1566.
[2] 8 Elizabeth, c. 6. [3] Ibid., Feb. 17, 1567–8.

cloths by the merchants. Such an appointment would, the Court considered, be to the great prejudice of the city, and for this reason and because the Privy Council was following the Queen on one of her progresses through the country, the handicraft members were requested to drop their petition for the time being, and in the meanwhile 'to sue to the Merchant Adventurers by gentle means and ways for their help and relief[1].'

The company consents to a search at the waterside

A compromise was subsequently arrived at which took the form of a search at the waterside of all cloth about to be exported. In April, 1591, 'the Wardens Assistants and divers other of the handicrafte' (here clearly identified with the yeomanry) made request, 'for that there is great suspicion of the negligence of the searchers at waterside in doinge their dutie there,' that there might 'be fower other honest men chosen out of the yomanry to oversee the other searchers in their busyness.' The yeomanry gained their point, and in the following July not only were four members appointed to oversee the London search, but also two others to do the like in Kent and Suffolk[2]. The zeal of the new officers soon brought them into conflict with the merchants, and in October the Court issued a declaration that although it was prepared to support all such seizures of cloth as were justly and orderly done, it could not make itself responsible for action taken upon surmise or presumption[3].

Contrast between the London cloth-workers and companies in provincial towns

In this manner the industrial interests and the commercial interests within the company continued through the next half-century to be balanced against each other, but on the whole with a decided preponderance on the side of the latter. The London company presents in this respect a significant contrast with most of the companies of cloth-workers in provincial towns. We have seen in our earlier survey of the development of the town organizations that by the end of the sixteenth century the interests of industrial capital were displacing those of commercial capital in many towns which had long been centres of the cloth trade. As the activities of a larger commerce radiating from the metropolis began to make their influence felt in every part of the country, the local trader, unable to compete on the same footing with the London merchant, largely transferred his capital to the cloth finishing industries springing up in the towns where he still enjoyed some of the advantages of a local monopoly. But this concentration of com-

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, June 13, 1575.
[2] Ibid., April 28, 1591 and July 14, 1591. [3] Ibid., Oct. 7, 1591.

mercial capital at the national centre, whilst it strengthened the relative position of industrial capital in provincial towns, tended naturally at the same time to keep the industrial capital of the metropolis in a condition of subordination to wider commercial interests. The governing body of the London Clothworkers' Company was always more concerned to promote the interests of the national cloth trade as a whole than those of the cloth-finishing industry in London.

illustrated by their attitude to Cockayne's scheme in 1614,

This was to be shown during the next reign by their attitude towards Alderman Cockayne's scheme for promoting the finishing and dyeing industries, with the wider aspects of which we shall have to deal more fully in a subsequent chapter. In Cockayne's scheme the somewhat reactionary ascendancy of the organized interests of industrial capital, assisted by a partial resuscitation of local monopoly, reached its culmination. Not only was the export of unfinished cloth, mostly the product of the country districts, to be replaced in a short time by an equivalent foreign trade in cloth finished and dyed in England; it was likewise promised that the trade of clothing would be set up in forty cities and boroughs.

which was supported by the handicraft but opposed by the ruling merchants,

The artisan clothworkers of London were of course enthusiastically in favour of the project. Indeed, it would seem to have arisen out of a petition which they along with some of the Dyers' Company addressed to the King. The governing body of the Clothworkers' Company, on the other hand, regarded the idea from the first as an impracticable one. When they heard of the petition they called before them the wardens of the yeomanry 'to know whether they were the begynners and procurers of the said suite, which they disclaimed, yet some of them did acknowledge to have had intelligence thereof. Whereupon the saide Wardens of the Yeomanry were advised and required by this Court, that howsoever they wished or required success to that suite, yet the same being difficult to be obteyned or the success doubtful, they wolde not hereafter bee seene in that business in such sorte that the bodie of this companie may anie way be reproached or the credit and reputation thereof brought into question[1].'

and almost leads to secession of former

The persistence of the artisan clothworkers with the project seemed at one moment on the point of leading to their secession in a body, and the formation of a separate company. And when after a year's trial the experiment had proved a hopeless failure, and the Privy Council were

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Mar. 8, 1612-3.

contemplating its abandonment, there was a tumultuous scene in the Clothworkers' Hall. Some of the King's advisers, supposed to be in favour of dropping the project, had been assailed by remonstrances in the shape of libels cast in at their houses by the indignant artisans. The wardens of the Clothworkers' Company, by direction of the Court of Aldermen, called an assembly of the artisan clothworkers, and gave them to understand how distasteful the scattering of such libels was to the King's Majesty and to the State. The craftsmen were in such an unrepentant frame of mind that they had brought one of their 'libels' with them, which, when the clerk of the company had obtained possession of it by subterfuge, was found 'to contayne matter tending to no good, nor fit to be passed over in silence.' One of the assistants therefore demanded 'whether any of that assembly had privity or were acquainted with the said petition.' Whereupon 'the whole multitude cryed out All! All! with such confused noise as struck terror and amazement to the Master Wardens and Assistants here assembled in general[1].'

Summary: Clothworkers' Company typical, yet with peculiar features

The results of this survey may now be briefly summed up. The Clothworkers' Company is a typical example of the new species of organization which replaced the Craft Gild, in the sense that it embraced the two distinct classes of traders and of craftsmen. But the special interest of the clothworkers' organization lies in the unusual degree of equilibrium in which the interests of these two classes were maintained for a considerable period. This was due to exceptional circumstances which prevented the complete predominance of either interest. The commercial interest was held in check by the fact that organizations representing that interest, the Drapers and the Merchant Adventurers, already held the field. The industrial interest was prevented from taking possession of the Clothworkers' Company, as it had done of similar companies in provincial towns, by the predominantly commercial character of London as the focus of national trade. Thus a compromise was effected of a peculiarly English character. The protection of labour was combined with the freedom of trade. The merchants were induced to sanction the regulations designed to preserve the status of the craftsman; and the craftsman was not permitted to hamper unduly the purely trading operations of the merchant.

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Jan. 27, 1616–7.

CHAPTER V

THE STUART CORPORATIONS OF SMALL MASTERS

The small master is the protagonist of industrial democracy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

We have already seen reasons for thinking that it was not the journeyman but the small master who bore the main stress of the economic conflict of classes during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The associations of journeymen which had played so prominent a part in the industrial organization of the earlier time seem to fall into the background after the close of the fifteenth century, and do not emerge till the end of the seventeenth century, from which period the modern trade union can trace a continuous history. Associations of journeymen still existed, and in some cases may even have maintained an unbroken continuity from the earlier to the later period. But for the most part the interest which attaches to the struggle of the journeyman with the master craftsman within the gilds during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is transferred during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the struggle between the small master and the merchant employer.

His position analogous to that of journeyman in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries

Not only had the class of small masters increased very largely at the expense of the class of permanent journeymen, the position of the small master in regard to organization at the end of the sixteenth century bore a striking resemblance to that of the journeyman at the end of the fourteenth century. The small masters, like the journeymen, had been gradually excluded from the benefits of the existing organizations; like them they had formed themselves into unauthorized associations of their own, for which they were endeavouring to obtain recognition; and in the one case as in the other, the organizations thus sanctioned tended to pass into the hands of a select body formed out of the more prosperous members of the class which had struggled for their establishment, and so failed to serve the purpose for which they had been originally intended.

In following therefore the evolution of industrial organization, it is to the efforts of the small masters to form associations for the protection of their special interests that we must look for the links with which to connect together the phenomena of the mediaeval craft gild and those of the modern trade union. In doing this, however, we must consider those efforts rather in their intentions than in their results. Looked at from the point of view of results, the organizations we are considering appear in later times to have become chiefly representative of the larger manufacturer, a new industrial class which their success had largely assisted to produce. But the circumstances of their earlier history make it clear that the intention of the movement that called them into existence was to preserve and strengthen the status of the small master, and to secure his independence in face of the growing power of larger capital.

He supplies the link between Gild and Trade Union

We may, in fact, distinguish three stages in the development of this class of association. The first of these was the stage of unauthorized combination, presenting many interesting parallels to the early history of the trade union. The second, which we may call the experimental stage, was marked by the attempts of the small master to use the newly granted charter of incorporation as a means of safeguarding his economic independence. The third stage was reached when the organizations settled down into the conservative grooves of a recognized livery company.

His efforts toward independent organization

The history of the first of these stages, which is our immediate concern, is largely identical with the history of the disintegration of some of the larger industrial combinations belonging to the type whose composition and working have been described in the last chapter.

are a symptom of the break up of the amalgamated companies,

The leather-sellers and the haberdashers remained of course, and still remain, amongst the most prosperous of livery companies, but early in the seventeenth century they were obliged to relinquish the functions which they had assumed a century before in relation to domestic industry. This was not due to any special defect in their constitutions, but to peculiar conditions which distinguished their case from that of the clothworkers. In the first place, they had lost whatever handicraft traditions of their own they had possessed, and were relatively too strong to be much affected by the traditions of the decaying crafts which they had absorbed. In the second place, instead of a stable connexion with a single industry, their economic basis consisted of a loose relation to a number of heterogeneous

industries, some of which were, while others were not, included within the scope of their corporate authority. And thirdly, all these industries were representatives of that more independent variety of the domestic system, in which the small master works upon his own materials and sells the product.

assisted by the migration of the crafts concerned to the suburbs

Closely connected with this last condition was the fact that most of the trades concerned had ceased to be carried on within the limits of the city. By the end of the sixteenth century the makers of felt hats and the various workers in leather had migrated across the river, and had already taken up their abodes where they are still to be found, in Bermondsey, Southwark, and Lambeth. In part this was owing to sanitary precautions. The main body of the leather-dressers had been removed outside the city by public order in the time of Edward IV. But a more general and potent cause was the search for lower rents. Since the working craftsman was no longer a shopkeeper, he did not need, and could not afford, to live within the freedom of the city[1]. In the year 1619 it was stated that there were not above forty members of the leather trades, and those glovers only, residing within the freedom of London, whilst there were glovers, leather-dressers, vellum and parchment-makers outside to the number of 3,000[2]. This migration widened the breach already made between the trader and the craftsman, and made it impossible for both to combine satisfactorily in a single organization. It placed great difficulties in the way of the exercise of effective authority by the companies over the industries they were supposed to regulate. It made the nominal share of the handicraft members in the company's freedom less and less of a reality; while at the same time it lent increasing force to their demand for a separate incorporation.

The case of the leather crafts for separation

When the workers in leather were petitioning James I in 1619 for a charter, they asserted that the leather-sellers, 'having promysed them they should ever be esteemed of their body, yet having once translated them by this order from the local circuit of their jurisdiction, they have in process of time wormed them out of their freedom, allowing none of the breede and posteritie of those workemen to be free to whom they made so large a promise, there not being at this day a leather-dresser free of the Leather-sellers' Company.' The leather-sellers, they declare in

[1] Strype, *Stowe's Survey*, ii. p. 32, and *Add. MSS.*, 12504, fol. 115.
[2] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccIxxxvi. p. 90; and *Privy Council Register*, Apr. 29, 1635.

another place, 'having injuriously driven us from our seates within the city and liberties are like chaungelings in our cradle alienated from the nature or knowledge of our trades, and soe incapable to governe us through ignorance.' It is not merely of the displacement of their craft organization by the Livery Company that the workers in leather complain. This process, they admit, was not peculiar to themselves, but it was not usual, they contended, for the ruling class of traders so completely to lose touch with the craftsmen who were nominally attached to their company, 'For whereas in all other trades, though the shopkeepers growing riche doe make the workemen their underlings, yet they suffer them according to their increase of ability to become like themselves, and in the meantime to exercise the favour and privilege of their company and society; and though in some trades the shopkeepers sell to the workemen their materials, yet they take them again from them wrought and manufactured at reasonable rates, as Goldsmiths, Skinners, Silkmen and divers others. But the Leathersellers who pretend themselves to be of the same trade with the Glovers, Pointmakers and White Tawyers, if once they put their griping hands betwixt the Grower and (=or) the Merchant and any of the said Trades they never parte with the commodities they buy till they sell them at their owne pitched rates without either regard or care whether the workeman be able to make his money thereof or no[1].'

The traders accused of monopoly

In a later document arising out of the same agitation, the men of the leather crafts endeavour to show that the company is no longer the natural representative even of the trading interest. It had originally been composed of 'such as *made*, *drest*, *and sold* wares of tanners leather.' 'But as the manner of London is, the sonne being free by the fathers copy, the company is long since changed to those that know not leather, for generally the Master and Wardens and Body . . . are men of other trades as braziers, hosiers, etc.' In the meantime the leather trade had been passing under the power of a new class of capitalists who in many cases were members of other companies. These were the traders who bought leather and sold it again 'without altering the properties of it.' The craftsmen declared that fifty years before (the actual period was probably much longer) such a class had been altogether unknown in London; and it was still not to be found elsewhere in the kingdom; yet matters had gone so far that

[1] *Brit. Museum, Add. MSS.* 12504, fol. 112.

something of the nature of a 'ring' had been formed in one branch of the trade. For nearly twenty years there had been generally no goats' or kids' leather to be found, save in the hands of three merchants, one of whom was free of the Leathersellers' Company, whilst the other two were members of the Haberdashers, though stationers by trade. It was this small class of capitalists together with their numerous agents, who were using the name of the Leathersellers' Company to hinder the granting of a new charter which might weaken the economic control they possessed over the master craftsmen[1].

The craftsmen attain incorporation.

The leatherworkers had begun their agitation about the year 1612—a time when, as we shall shortly see, a similar movement was very widespread amongst the London craftsmen. In 1619 they complained that they had, in consequence, like the Israelites, been doubled in their tasks, the prices of their materials being enhanced to a great proportion, and humbly implored that they might be assisted 'to pass the Red Sea of their troubles'; if not, they must 'prepare their necks to the yoke of the Egyptians, and their hearts to the intolerable servitude they had hitherto endured[2].' At last in 1638, by the use of court influence, the workers in leather obtained their charter and were incorporated as the Glovers' Company, just at the moment when the favourable opportunity presented by the personal government of the Stuarts was about to pass away.

II

Importance of the feltmakers' case

The evidence in our possession concerning the Leathersellers' Company and the crafts which it had absorbed, serves, in spite of its scantiness, to cover the whole history of the combination. It reveals the conditions of its formation, and illustrates, briefly yet intelligibly, the process of its decay and the manner of its dissolution. As historical evidence it is, however, marked by two serious defects. It consists largely of a retrospect made more than a century after the earliest events referred to, and it is derived chiefly from the statements of one party to a bitter controversy. The evidence in the parallel case of the Haberdashers' Company and the Feltmakers is not only free from these defects; it supplies also a much fuller account of the relation between the merchants and the craftsmen during the period of the combination, and it derives moreover a special

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccLxxxvi. 90.
[2] *Brit. Museum, Add. MSS.*, 12504, fol. 104.

interest from the fact that it was the success of the feltmakers in achieving independence in 1604, which stimulated the efforts of the leather-workers and supplied their claims with a precedent.

The haberdashers having absorbed the hatters and cappers,

The subordination of the feltmakers to the haberdashers had not, however, been brought about in quite the same way as had been that of the glovers and the leather-workers to the leather-sellers. The Haberdashers' Company, it is true, in its sixteenth-century constitution was based like the Leathersellers on an amalgamation; but neither the cappers (Hurrers), nor the hatter merchants, who were both absorbed in 1500, can be identified with the feltmakers[1]. It is significant that the hatters, even before they were united to the haberdashers, were known, not as craftsmen but as merchants. The rough caps worn by the lower orders had been made in England from the earliest times; but the more luxurious headgear of the wealthier classes had been imported from abroad. Chaucer's merchant wore

'Uppon his heed a Flaundrisch bevere hat,'

and it was with the caps and hats of France, of Bruges, and of Milan that the London hatter or haberdasher supplied the fashionable world.

upon the rise of the feltmakers' industry,

Felt hats were not extensively made in England before the sixteenth century. The tradition of the trade is that they were invented on the continent in 1456, and first made in London in 1510[2]. The art of felt-making had, however, been discovered at a much earlier period, and the event approximately marked by these dates was an improved industrial application of it which resulted in bringing felt hats into general use. The new manufacture was set up in England early in the reign of Henry VIII, largely through the instrumentality of immigrants from the Netherlands and from Normandy[3]; and it soon proved a formidable rival to the capping industry.

In 1576 the native-born feltmakers in and about London were said to number above four hundred householders. The relation of this body of craftsmen to the Haberdashers' Company was at that time still a matter of uncertainty. The feltmakers repeatedly spoke of themselves as a company 'although having no government of themselves as other companies have'; and they petitioned to be

[1] Herbert, *Livery Companies*, ii. p. 537. [2] See below, p. 15.
[3] See list of immigrants given by W. Page in *Huguenot Society's Publications*, viii.

incorporated by the Crown, that they might regulate the trade with authority[1].

gain a partial control over it

The haberdashers, on the other hand, claimed that the control of the new manufacture belonged to them. An Act of 1565, which had been passed with the object of protecting the capping industry against the too rapid advance of the feltmakers, had given authority to the haberdashers to search both industries with the assistance of a craftsman chosen from each[2]. On the strength of the position thus conferred upon them the haberdashers were able to defeat the main object of this petition, but a compromise was arrived at and an order set down in the Star Chamber which directed the haberdashers, in conjunction with representatives of the feltmakers, to make ordinances for the regulation of the trade[3]. The spirit of this order was, however, easily evaded by the haberdashers, and in 1579 the feltmakers were seeking a remedy for their grievances along other lines.

The feltmakers' complaint against the merchants

It appears that the management of their previous petition had been entrusted to two of their number who had a gift for organization, and that a collection had been made to enable them to devote themselves to the agitation. These two men now put themselves forward once more, claiming to speak on behalf of more than three thousand feltmakers in London and elsewhere, who, they complain, are 'daily urged to buy great quantities of Spanish, Easteridge and French wools that is brought into this said Realm unwashed and so full of May wool and other evil wool, dross, filthy dust and sand as in most of it your said poor Orators do lose the one half or the third part and in the best of it they do usually lose a fourth part.' The remedy proposed is that an officer should be appointed to see that the wool is cleansed and sorted before it is sold. The petitioner hints, however, that there will be strong opposition to this scheme, 'since the wool is now brought in most by knights, merchants, and aldermen . . . who for their own private gain will hinder the same all that they may[4].'

The merchants denounce the feltmakers' delegates

The chief interest of the merchants' answer to these allegations lies in their attitude towards the feltmakers' representatives. 'Bradford and Caunton, the parties that make this complaint, are two of very slender credit and of the worst sort of felters, haunters of taverns where they enter into devices, not to do any good to the commonweal, but to maintain their idle life with other men's goods. And

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, xxiv. 7.
[2] 8 Elizabeth, c. 11.
[3] *Lansdowne MSS.*, xxviii. 29.
[4] Ibid., xxviii. 31.

to that end heretofore they went about to sue to make themselves a corporation and . . . gathered contributions of poor men to maintain their busy labouring therein . . . Likewise at this tyme they have made like collections to set themselves on worke in suit and have gathered names and associate themselves with a few of the worst of that trade and (as it is thought) some names are marked and subscribed without the parties' assent . . . and so they make clamorous show of a multitude of 3,000 which is wholly untrue . . . The best and honestest sort of feltmakers who live by their true labour and skill make no such request[1].'

The delegates defend their own position

In a lengthy manifesto set forth in reply to these charges, Bradford and Caunton declare themselves ready to answer and purge themselves of any crime or evil dealing. They admit levying the first contribution, though they deny the second, and they add: 'And as the said Bradford and Caunton at that time were and yet are thought meet and put in trust by a number of the feltmakers for all suits that concern the said science . . . therefore the following of such tedious suits is neither any idle life nor the enriching of such suitors by the sweat of other men's brows as they untruely allege.' Their first suit for a corporation, they continue, ended in a compromise, and ordinances were drawn up by learned counsel of both parties, and confirmed by the Lord Treasurer and the two Chief Justices; in the first of which it was ordered that the master and wardens of the haberdashers with five of the feltmakers yearly chosen should search all manner of foreign wools, 'which search the haberdashers have not used because the chiefest and most part of the merchants that bringeth in and the ingrossers of the said wools are haberdashers.' It may be that some of 'the richest feltmakers, which the aldermen and merchants account the honestest, do somewhat hold themselves contented . . . for that they with ready money and part credit, do buy much . . . and so have the choice and best.' But the poorest sort of feltmakers, to whom the aldermen sell the worst refuse at the price of the best wool, 'are daily and lamentably undone and are grown to such poverty as they dare not show their faces, and now since your Orators made complaint sundry of the said aldermen . . . have come unto and sent unto sundry of the feltmakers that owe them money to know if they complained and such of them as said yea were checked, and taunted, and such of them as said they did not were

and describe the dependence of the feltmakers

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, xxix. 25.

persuaded to set their hands against the said complaint which they refused to do . . . and now the said aldermen . . . will sell no wool to the said poor feltmakers but in scorn, answer them they will sell none till it be garbled[1].' The last word on the side of the merchants recommends that strong measures should be taken against the agitators 'for otherwise they have so settled their idle living upon such devices and vexations that they will never make end thereof[2].'

Feltmakers appeal to haberdashers to protect their status

From the Court Books of the Haberdashers' Company, which have been preserved from 1583 onwards, and from the records of the Court of Aldermen, we are enabled to trace the further development of the situation until 1604, when the feltmakers obtained their charter. On several occasions, deputations of working feltmakers, who were free of the haberdashers, invoked the support of the company in defence of the interests of their craft; and in their efforts to set the Statute of Apprentices in motion against the country workers, or to exclude the competition of aliens, they obtained a certain amount of sympathy and assistance. But another grievance seems to have touched the interests of the haberdashers too nearly to find redress at their hands. In June 1585 'Certeyne poore workmen of the Company complayned of the great abuse of dyvers as well freemen of the company as of others that are workmen as themselves be, who do kepe greate numbers of apprentices and instructe wenches in their arte . . . and do sell great quantity of wares unto chapmen altogether untrymmed, whereby they saie a multitude might be sett on worke and relieved, if the same might be done here as heretofore.' To this complaint the feltmakers received the somewhat evasive answer that they should put their griefs in writing that they might be better considered[3].

Reasons for their want of response

Here was a cause of difference similar to that which we have seen to exist at the same time within the Clothworkers' Company. But the feltmakers had not the same effectual representation in the Haberdashers' Company as the handicraft clothworkers possessed in their yeomanry organization. Not only were some of the feltmakers (as was the case with the clothworkers too) attached to other companies; a still larger number pursued their calling outside the boundaries of the city. Nor were the feltmakers the only craftsmen to whom the haberdashers stood in the relation of merchant employers. These causes

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, xxviii. 28. [2] Ibid., xxix. 26.
[3] *Haberdashers' Court Book*, June 26, 1585.

account for the loose connexion between the craft and the company.

Attempt to secure representation for feltmakers

As late as 1590 the order made by the Privy Council in 1577, that five of the feltmakers should be chosen to take part with the haberdashers in the control of their industry, seems not to have been carried into effect. A committee appointed by the Court of Aldermen in that year to consider what course was best for putting the order into execution, recommended that three of the five feltmakers should be chosen by the haberdashers and that the other two should be freemen of London, but not free of the Haberdashers' Company [1]. After this, five feltmakers began to be regularly appointed to act as assistants to the wardens of the haberdashers' yeomanry in matters relating to their trade; and for several years the quarterage levied from the feltmakers was granted to their representatives to use in furtherance of their suits [2].

Further complaints and final separation

But the divergence of interests between traders and craftsmen was not arrested by this concession. 'In 1599 divers poorer workmen once more petitioned the Company for redress touching the sale of untrymmed hatts to Chapmen in the country which is now done dailie by wholesale men [3].' Next year they declared their intention of carrying their case before the Lord Mayor [4], and in 1601 their resolution had been wrought up to the pitch of promoting a Bill in Parliament itself, in which enterprise they boldly invoked the assistance of the Haberdashers' Company [5]. The reply to this piece of audacity is probably to be found in an order made shortly after, that the feltmakers be sued for £10 or thereabouts owing to the Company unless they make speedy payment [6]. The feltmakers were at this time in need of all their available resources. In 1604 they not only obtained a charter from the King but procured the passage of an Act of Parliament. Some indignation was caused in the House of Commons by a statement that Mr. Typper, one of the members, had received £100 for getting the Feltmakers' Bill through the House; and the explanation offered was that the £100 had been paid for getting the charter passed under the great seal [7].

Note.—The tendency of the industrial element in the older companies towards independent organization will receive further illustration in sub-

[1] *City of London Repertories*, xxii. fol. 51.
[2] *Haberdashers' Court Book*, Nov., 1592, Oct., 1594. [3] Ibid., Nov., 1599.
[4] Ibid., Apr. 7, 1600. [5] Ibid., Oct., 1601. [6] Ibid., Jan., 1601–2.
[7] *House of Commons Journals*, i. p. 194; see also entries under May 7, 11, 15 and 16, 1604; *State Papers Dom., James I*, July 29, 1604 (1603–10, p. 138).

sequent chapters from the cases of the Artisan Skinners (p. 202), the Artisan Clothworkers (p. 201), and the Pinmakers (p. 165). Other cases of new incorporations resulting from this movement were the Apothecaries' and the Starchmakers' Companies separated from the Grocers; the Clockworkers' Company separated from the Blacksmiths, and the Silkmen, who after several ineffectual attempts at last obtained their charter in spite of the opposition of the Weavers' Company.

III

Significance of intervention of royal power on behalf of small masters,

That the efforts of the glovers and of the feltmakers towards an independent organization should have been assisted to a successful conclusion by the intervention of the royal power was not an accidental circumstance. These cases are typical of a wider development. In the sixteenth century the industrial world had outgrown its mediaeval framework. New classes were arising which had no recognized status within the existing social order; and it was the natural policy of the monarchy to take them under its protection. By exerting its prerogative to create new privileges on their behalf, the Crown was enabled not only to extend the range of its authority but also to open up a new source of income, which was sorely needed in support of its increasing pretensions [1].

illustrated by policy of French monarchy

The pursuit of this policy is most clearly exemplified in the case of France. A right springing from the feudal organization of the royal household (the modern counterpart of which is perhaps to be seen in the 'special appointment' of a tradesman as jeweller or perfumer to His Majesty the King), was developed by the French monarch during

Lettres de maîtrise

the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries into a power of issuing letters patent, by way of celebrating a royal birth or marriage, for the creation of an additional master in every trade corporation throughout the kingdom. As the exclusiveness of the corporations increased, the occasions so celebrated were multiplied, and the royal *lettres de maîtrise* became a regular administrative device for mitigating the monopoly of the corporations, whilst at the same time raising a convenient revenue for the supply of royal necessities [2]. The famous edict of Henry III in 1581 and

Edicts of 1581, 1597

[1] The force of this fiscal motive was much underrated by Mr. Gardiner in his history (iv. p. 6); but it has since been fully recognized by Dr. Cunningham in the 3rd edition, *Growth*, &c., ii. p. 288.

[2] Levasseur, *Histoire*, ii. p. 128; R. Eberstadt, *Die Entwickelung der Königsmeister*, &c., in Schmoller's *Jahrbuch*, 1897; R. Eberstadt, *Das französische Gewerberecht*, in Schmoller's *Forschungen*, 1899, pp. 309, 358-61.

the supplementary ordinance of Henry IV in 1597, which occupy a place in French industrial history corresponding to that of the English Statute of Apprentices (1563), gave to the same principle a still more universal application. All the masters in every trade were required by these enactments to take an oath before a Crown official, and to pay an entrance fee to the royal exchequer; and upon fulfilling these conditions the suburban master became qualified, after three years' service, to exercise his calling in the town, which had been hitherto closed to him by the trade corporations[1].

Elements of similarity in English situation

Many and important as are the differences of method revealed in the French and English attempts to codify and nationalize industrial law, the fundamental distinction is to be found in the fiscal motive which everywhere underlies the French legislation, and which is conspicuously absent from the English. But it must not be forgotten that in the one case we have to do with a royal edict, in the other case with an Act of Parliament. Although, therefore, there is no indication in the Statute of Apprentices of an attempt to turn the opportunity to a fiscal account, it must not be assumed that such an attempt was never made in England. Devices of this nature are apt to form part of the common stock of contemporary nations which share the same civilization. It is not in the mere presence or absence of this or that element of statecraft, this or that method of social organization or principle of constitutional law, that such a group of nations find their characteristic distinctions; it is rather the proportion which these elements bear to one another, and their manner of grouping round some predominant feature, that determine the political individuality of a nation and seem to make its character unique[2].

Project to administer Statute of Apprentices

For this reason it is not surprising to find that within ten years after the passing of the Statute of Apprentices, proposals were made to the English Government, which bear a considerable similarity to the system embodied eight years later in the French edict of 1581[3]. The projector was one of that class of volunteer statesmen who were encouraged at this time by the growing administrative activity of the Crown to offer their schemes for the

[1] Levasseur, ii. pp. 138, 156; Eberstadt, *Das französische Gewerberecht*, p. 309.

[2] Cf. H. Sidgwick, *Development of European Polity*, p. 232.

[3] A corresponding policy adopted by the Prussian Government in the eighteenth century is described by Schmoller, *Umrisse und Untersuchungen*, p. 419.

benefit of the commonwealth (and the increase of the Queen's revenues), with an accompanying prayer that they might be chosen as humble instruments to carry out the good work which they had recommended. Prefixed to the proposal, by way of explanatory introduction, is a brief commentary on the Statute of Apprentices, in which the motives which might have been supposed to have actuated the legislative mind are set forth clause by clause, so that the whole affords a valuable clue to the opinions as to class relationship prevalent at that time. The reason why the country artificers, who combine domestic industry with the occupation of husbandry, are not allowed to take apprentices is that this would lead to 'the gathering of divers men's livings into one man's hand.' The master in most occupations is required to dwell in a city, town corporate, or market town, because 'cities and great towns are only or for the most part to be maintained by manual arts and occupations.' The father of the apprentice must be an artificer not occupying husbandry nor being a labourer; because 'it is a more easier thing for the children of husbandmen and labourers to become artificers than for the children of artificers to become husbandmen and labourers, and therefore when husbandmen and labourers do put their children to learn occupations, the artificer's children are driven to be rogues and vagabonds.' The property qualification required in the case of parents who wish to apprentice their sons to merchandise 'seemeth to be enacted that gentlemen ... might have some convenient means to bestow and place their younger sons in the commonwealth to live in a reasonable countenance and calling; the want whereof causeth many to be more mindful to gather for their children than to regard the state of the commonwealth [1].'

Social motives of the statute interpreted

The great measure, of which these were some of the leading provisions, which was enacted the year before the birth of Shakespeare and remained on the statute book till the beginning of the nineteenth century, presents two very different aspects to the historical student. Looked at from one standpoint, it is a monument of the progress which had been achieved at the time when it was passed in the direction of national unity. Earlier statutes had dealt with particular localities, e. g. the Eastern Counties or the towns of Worcestershire; or with particular industrial sections, as in the case of the Statutes of Labourers, or the Weavers' Act of 1555; or with particular institutions as in

The statute marks the achievement of a national economy,

[1] *State Papers Dom., Elizabeth*, xciii. 26.

the case of the Acts passed to regulate the gilds; but the Act of 1563 was an attempt on a grand scale to bring every locality (with one or two important exceptions) under the operation of a single code, to regulate the relations of all classes of the working population, whether engaged in agriculture, industry or commerce, by assigning to each class its proper place in the framework of a uniform system; and finally to provide machinery for maintaining this system in equilibrium by the periodical adjustment of the conditions of employment. The idea of a national economy finds in this great piece of Elizabethan legislation its most notable expression[1].

but attempts to stereotype obsolete conditions

But from another point of view the Statute of Apprentices represented a vain endeavour to give fixity and permanence to a condition of things which already, in great part, belonged to the past[2]. During the preceding century England had experienced the beginnings of that development which was to make her predominantly an industrial and commercial country. Labour and capital were acquiring a new mobility; and the population was leaving its settled abodes and customary forms of employment in order to meet the requirements of a wider economy of production. Henceforward the manufacturing interests of the country were to show a steady relative increase, and the agricultural interests a steady relative decline. In the end this process involved a corresponding gain of the town population at the expense of the country; but the immediate effect was not of this character; indeed, in many cases it was exactly the opposite. England's greatest manufacture was leaving its older seats in the privileged cities and boroughs for the freedom and the cheapness of the countryside; and the great urban industrial centres of the future were to be looked for in a number of prosperous villages and unincorporated market towns.

Natural reasons for this conservation

All these changes were regarded with distrust and even with dismay, not only by the average conservative Englishman, but by the earnest reformer of higher aims and deeper insight. Nor is this surprising in view of the social disorganization which invariably characterizes such processes of transition, the want and disorder inevitably arising amongst floating masses of population, and the moral evils which accompany the break-up of old habits and observances. Deeply moved by his meditation on these things, Sir Thomas More would willingly have turned his

[1] Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., ii. pp. 6, 25–31.
[2] For a different view cf. ibid., p. 32.

countrymen back to an idealized form of a more primitive economy, preserving agriculture as the essential basis of social life, placing a severe restraint on the development of the industrial arts, and preventing all the evils arising from the division of labour by compelling every member of society to take a share by turns in the activities both of the town and of the country.

The economic forces too strong for legislative restriction

The Statute of Apprentices presents a touch of literal coincidence with More's romance in the clause authorizing magistrates to compel artisans to assist in the harvest-field; but the Elizabethan statesmen were not idealists, and would have been content to keep things as nearly as possible as they found them. The countryside, the market towns, the corporate boroughs and cities, each represented social elements which it was the duty of the legislator to keep within the limits of their separate spheres.

The intention underlying this and many subsidiary pieces of Tudor legislation, was that whilst the distinctions created by local privilege between different sections of the same class were to be as far as possible removed, the distinctions between the several classes themselves as horizontal sections of the whole nation were to be preserved, and their existing relations to each other maintained in something like equilibrium. But the maintenance of such an equilibrium was impossible. No Act of Parliament could permanently restrain the forces making for a fundamental redistribution of economic functions, and for the establishment of a freer, but more complex and more divergent, system of social relations[1].

It is proposed to legalize the inevitable change

Of the truth of this the nature of the proposals already referred to is sufficient evidence. Ten years after the passing of the Statute of Apprentices, it was declared to have been very largely disregarded. It is true that this is attributed to the want of special machinery to enforce the law, 'without which it is nothing but a vain and dead letter, scarce known, and if known yet not regarded, neither by the officers to whom the execution thereof pertaineth nor by the people to whom the observation of the same belongeth.' At the same time it is argued that it would be impossible, or at any rate very impolitic, to disturb all those who were already exercising a trade in contravention of the Act, and whilst one of the proposals was for the

[1] Cf. Schmoller, *Studien über die wirthschaftliche Politik Friedrichs des Grossen*, xii. p. 34, in *Jahrbuch*, xi; for an account of a similar situation at a later date in Prussia; also Schmoller, *Umrisse und Untersuchungen*, pp. 374–6.

establishment of a compulsory registration of all apprentices, journeymen and masters, with a view to the better observance of the law in the future, the other was to provide those who had already offended with an opportunity of legalizing their offence by compounding with the Queen's representatives for a lump sum [1].

and to turn it to fiscal account

In this way the money wasted in ruinous lawsuits started by informers would flow into the Queen's exchequer, and a large and striving class would be restored to the status of law-abiding subjects. It is curious to find almost the same language used and the same motives invoked in the case of the small masters of the sixteenth century, as would naturally suggest themselves nowadays to any one who wished to convince unorganized workmen of the advantages of a trade union. The 'unlawful artificers,' it is said, must recognize the benefits of the scheme, because it must be obvious to them that, just as their unauthorized competition has reduced the earnings of the lawful artificers from a shilling to ninepence, so their earnings in turn are liable to be beaten down by further intruders from ninepence to sixpence [2].

Subsequent attempts to realize this idea

There is nothing to show that the proposals made in 1573 were authorized by the Crown; but in 1619 a commission on similar lines was issued to Sir James Spence and others, and after a short experience recalled into the King's hands as being too important to be held by subjects [3]. A new attempt was made under Charles I by Sir Alexander Gordon. The two Chief Justices approved of Sir Alexander's scheme, but Attorney-General Noy felt some scruples, and the King himself suggested modifications. Later on Sir Alexander 'moved for a commission to treat for pardons to such offenders as of their own accord should desire the same; whereunto His Majesty condescended, uttering these words:—"volenti non fit injuria."' As, however, the final authorization was still being sought for in 1638, when the time for such undertakings was fast coming to an end, it is probable that the proposal was never carried into effect [4].

[1] This method of raising a revenue by allowing persons, who had infringed some generally neglected law, to compound for their offence by payments to a royal patentee became common. For its application to the tanning industry see *Lansdowne MSS.*, xxiv. 71–6. Five such grants for compounding were revoked by Charles I in 1632; see *Privy Council Register*, Mar. 31, 1639.

[2] *State Papers Dom., Elizabeth*, xciii. 26–35.

[3] Ibid., *James I*, cv. 78–80; cxx. 61: see also xxiv. 73.

[4] Ibid., *Charles I*, ccccviii. 16. The same policy is indicated by the establishment of a new corporation of retail traders in London, which

IV

Mixed motives of Stuart intervention

In the light which this constantly recurring project casts upon the general tendency of the industrial policy of the Stuarts, we are better able to realize the significance of such grants of incorporation as those made to the feltmakers and the glovers. It was, in fact, the same policy applied with greater success in the narrower field of a particular industry. In conferring the new charters, just as in the proposed grant of pardons, the Crown was supporting the struggling outsider against the power of existing vested interests. In neither case were the motives entirely disinterested. Mingled with the idea of encouraging the weaker forces of industrial capital against the stronger forces of commercial capital, was the need of new sources of revenue, and the desire to conciliate a growing class of the community.

It is welcomed by craftsmen, but opposed by merchants

This class interest has been somewhat overlooked. The interference of the Crown with trade and industry at this period is not thoroughly comprehensible, unless it is considered in relation to the undoubted demand for such interference. In Elizabeth's reign, as we have seen, the feltmakers petitioned for the appointment of a Crown official to regulate the sale of wool; and the clothworkers asked for a Packer to oversee the export of cloth [1]. In both cases the craftsmen wished to restrict the merchants' freedom of trade, which was, they alleged, exercised to their disadvantage. But the difference between the attitude of the merchants and that of the craftsmen to the exercise of the royal prerogative, is best illustrated in the case of a patent granted to a certain Mr. Darcy in 1592, for searching and sealing leather [2]. The grant of this patent was supported by many of the workers, as a means of procuring them a better supply of material. The leather-sellers, on the other hand, asserted that the patent was contrary to the laws of the land, and involved 'the unnecessary taxing of all the commons in the Realm, especially the poorer sorte whose chief wearing leather is,' and boldly declared that the people would be in bondage if they could be taxed without consent of Parliament [3]. For holding this language some of the leading merchants suffered fine and imprison-

was to provide a status for those who were not freemen out of the city; see *Privy Council Register*, May 6, 1638.

[1] See pp. 122, 132. [2] Strype, *Stow's Survey*, ii. p. 205.

[3] *Lansdowne MSS.*, lxxiv. 42; cf. *Harleian MSS.*, 6850, fol. 157.

ment. At a later period when the glovers were on the point of gaining their charter, the leather-sellers declared their fears that the new corporation 'would turn to a plain monopoly and to a confederacy'; whereupon the glovers retorted that this was equivalent to taxing with monopolies and confederacies the Lord Chancellor and Chief Justices of both benches, whose sanction would be necessary to make the King's grant legal [1].

The protection of the craftsmen a real motive,

That the idea of protecting the interests of the poorer industrial classes was a real motive of Stuart policy, is shown by the royal intervention in two cases where a grant of incorporation was not held to be expedient. The calkers of ships and the printers both appealed to the Government with success against their employers, the shipwrights and the stationers. In each of these cases there were reasons of state which counteracted the prevailing tendency to favour the independence of the small master. The Government deemed it necessary to exercise a strict supervision alike over the building of ships and over the printing and sale of books; and it was much easier to fix responsibility upon the capitalist than upon the craftsman. Large securities were required from the shipwright that he would not build for foreign powers, and from the stationer that he would not publish seditious books. But although these considerations induced the Crown to maintain the authority of the capitalist employer, regulations were granted to the subordinated crafts, to serve instead of those which a royal charter would have empowered them to make for their own protection [2].

The records of the Privy Council during the period when Charles governed without a Parliament leave no doubt as to the sincere desire of the King or of his ministers to promote the interests of the working classes. The Privy Council made frequent efforts to prevent a decline, or even to effect a rise, in the wages of the workers in the country cloth industry, and its intervention was constantly being invoked by the small master craftsmen of the metropolis [3]. The artisan pewterers [4] and armourers [5]

[1] *Add. MSS.*, 12504, fol. 105; *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccl xxxvi. 90.

[2] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cci. 105; ccci. 105 and cccl xxix. 27; cxxvi. 26; cccliii. 87.

[3] Leonard, *Early English Poor Relief*, p. 160. In 1637 a Colchester clothier was imprisoned in the Fleet for giving low wages and paying in truck; *Privy Council Register*, May 10, 1637.

[4] *Privy Council Register*, Jan. 1, 1639.

[5] Ibid., Apr. 3, May 22, June 4, 1635.

appealed to it over the heads of the traders who ruled their companies. The Cutlers' Company received a warrant to put down unauthorized merchant employers[1]. The freemasons obtained, through the 'Commissioners for buildings,' an order forbidding the plasterers to overlay rotten stonework[2]. The plumbers[3] and the glaziers[4] applied for a remedy against the supply of bad materials by the merchants; and the ropemakers and hempdressers obtained an inquiry into a ring which they alleged had been formed in the hemp market[5].

but easily gave way to lower motives

If we wish to see how this more respectable aspect of the Stuart policy blended with, or degenerated into, the aspect of trading monopoly established from fiscal motives, we have only to turn to the petition of the Playing-card makers to the Long Parliament in 1641, asking that their charter might not be taken away. Foreign playing-cards, they explained, had been prohibited by Act of Parliament since the time of Edward IV; but as a large quantity continued to be imported, King Charles had granted them a charter in 1628, for the better protection of their industry. Want of capital, however, had prevented them from taking full advantage of the monopoly thus conferred. The haberdashers still managed to get supplies of cards from abroad, and the poor playing-card makers, so ran the pathetic story, 'compelled to sell at low rates could scarce get bread for their fainting bodies.' In this extremity they had cast themselves at the foot of the throne, and in 1637 'His Majesty had graciously covenanted, under the great seal, to buy a constant weekly proportion of good cards at specified rates; and to such of the Company as were poor widows, aged men past labour, or not able to maintain themselves, his Majesty out of his princely goodness had allowed a maintenance of his profits, . . . for which the petitioners praised God and blessed his Majesty.' In consideration of which contract they had most willingly submitted to the sealing of all playing-cards made by the Company, and that thirty-six shillings should be raised to His Majesty on every gross of fine cards made and sold in the kingdom, which they were confident would amount

e. g. King's monopoly of playing-cards

[1] *Privy Council Register*, Mar. 5, 1632.
[2] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, ccclxvii. 88.
[3] *Privy Council Register*, Apr. 25, 1632; see also bibliography of Plumbers' Company. In this case the supply was in the hands of a monopolist.
[4] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, ccclxxviii. 58.
[5] Ibid., *Charles I*, cclvii. 14; *Privy Council Register*, March 5, 1633–4.

to £5,000 or £6,000 per annum constant revenue to the Crown for ever[1].

General tendency of intervention to create monopoly,

Although this was not the only instance of a monopoly being supplied with capital, either directly or indirectly, by the King[2], most of the numerous monopolies of this period were in the hands of private persons, who were of course charged with periodical payments to the exchequer. But what the case of the playing-card makers renders quite clear is the almost inevitable tendency of industrial privileges vested in bodies of craftsmen to fall into the hands of speculating capitalists, who could attempt to exploit the industry somewhat on the lines of the modern trust. Failure in these enterprises was quite as frequent as success, and the breakdown of one projector afforded the Government the opportunity of issuing another patent covering the same privilege[3]. In this way one monopolist took the field against another monopolist, and the interests of the craftsman, which were the supposed motive of the grant, so far from being forwarded, were not even considered.

illustrated by Beaver-makers' Company

An example of this is supplied in the experiences of the feltmakers during the later years of the reign of Charles I. Both James and Charles had supported their efforts to make themselves independent of the haberdashers, and to gain the recognition of the city for their corporation[4]. But when the increasing vogue of the beaver hat was beginning to open up to the feltmakers new possibilities of profitable employment, the temptation to acquire an additional source of revenue by turning this branch of the industry into a separate monopoly proved too strong to be resisted. A new Company of Beaver-makers was incorporated, at whose hall every beaver hat was to be stamped, and to pay a tax of one shilling[5]. Both the haberdashers and the feltmakers resisted the authority of the new company. No hats were taken to the hall. The

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccclxxvii. 64; see also clv. 62 and clxxxv. 18.

[2] Cf. the case of the pinmakers in the next chapter, and that of the gold and silver thread monopoly, for which see Gardiner, *History of England*, iv. p. 13. James the First also took over the alum monopoly; see *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii.

[3] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, lxxxix. 12; cf. Gardiner, *Hist. of England*, iv. pp. 8 et seq.; Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., ii. p. 306.

[4] *City of London Repertories*, xxxiii. fol. 354; liii. fol. 60; *State Papers Dom., James I*, 1619–23, p. 442; ibid., *Charles I*, cxcvii. 16.

[5] Ibid., *Charles I*, ccclxxxii. 53; ccclxxxix, May 1, 1638; ccccxvii. 2; ccccxviii. 72; and Rymer, *Foedera*, O. xx. 230.

searchers appointed by the monopolists were treated with contumely. All the parties concerned continued for many months to besiege the King with petitions[1]; and at length, in September, 1639, he sat in solemn judgement on the dispute, and proceeded to mark out felt-making and beaver-making as separate callings, which were henceforth never to encroach upon each other. The difficulty arising from the fact that a considerable trade was done in hats of a mixed kind, worn by those who could not afford pure beaver, had been already disposed of by prohibiting these mixed hats altogether as deceitful nondescripts, injurious to the public morals[2].

Monopoly was not an advantage to the small master

Without discussing the advantages conferred on the consumer, we may ask what was the effect upon the craftsman of this royal manipulation of industrial interests. Only those can be supposed to have benefited upon whom the new monopoly of beaver-making was conferred. But within the same year the rank and file of the beaver-makers complained to the King that the formation of the new company had been their ruin. They had previously carried on as small masters a considerable trade in the mixed hats, combined with a small manufacture of pure beavers. The eight capitalists who had promoted the monopoly had induced them to join the new company by threats of excluding them from beaver-making, and by promises that their trade in mixed hats should not be interfered with. Now that the mixed hats were prohibited, they were deprived of their principal means of employment. The demand for hats of pure beaver was too small, and the material too expensive, to permit of their confining themselves to this branch of manufacture, and indeed they asserted that the eight leading monopolists had by that time got it almost entirely into their own hands[3]. To the great majority, therefore, of those engaged in the manufacture, the abolition of the monopoly by the Long Parliament, which assembled in the following year[4], must have come as an unmitigated relief.

The history of the Beaver-makers' Company illustrates the tendency of the Stuart corporations to become merged in the general mass of monopolies granted by the Crown, some forty of which, including eight corporations, were

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccclxvi. 68; ccccix. 126; ccccx. 144–5; and ccccxxii. 5, also Calendar for 1638–9, p. 411.
[2] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, ccccxxviii. 2, 43, 77.
[3] *Carew Transcripts at the Record Office*, p. 52.
[4] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, House of Lords' Calendar, Nov. 25, 1640.

revoked by Charles I in 1639, with a view to conciliating public opinion[1]. By this time most of the companies incorporated were, like the other monopolies, under the control of one or more capitalists, who paid a lump sum down for the concession, and charged themselves in addition with an annual rent to the Crown. The preservation of the independence of the small master, which as we have seen was the original aim of the movement towards incorporation, was almost entirely lost sight of. To consider in some detail the process by which this was brought about will be the business of the ensuing chapter.

Note.—This chapter has dealt only with London corporations. How far the companies chartered by the Stuarts in other industrial centres presented features corresponding to those above described, is a problem that could only be solved by extensive and intensive local research. But the clothing corporations established at Bury St. Edmunds (*Hist. MSS. Report, Bury*, p. 141), at Ipswich (*State Papers Dom., James I*, cxii. 62–3, 105), at Colchester (ibid., cxv. 28), and at Leeds (ibid., 1656, cxxxi. 7), were complained of as exhibiting the abuses of monopoly.

Considerable light is shed upon Stuart policy by the projects for industrial corporations which were never carried into effect. Foremost amongst these was a frequently recurring proposal to set up in every city, corporate town, or county where the manufacture of the new draperies was carried on, a clothing corporation with officers nominated by the local magistrates or justices, and thus indirectly under the control of the Crown. This project, which anticipated the most ambitious aspects of the policy of Colbert, was first brought forward by a certain Hugh Morrell in 1616, was the subject of frequent consideration by the Privy Council (*Privy Council Register*, Mar. 27, 1616; 18 Feb. 1618; 11 Feb., 10 May, 1620; see also *State Papers Dom., James I*, cxxxi. 34–6), and, upon the accession of Charles, actually received the royal sanction in an elaborate form applying to thirty-two counties, but was set aside owing to the pressure of foreign concerns (*State Papers Dom., Charles I*, i. 24, 62; x. 66) and only seems to have taken practical shape in the case of an experiment, which proved unsuccessful, in Hertfordshire (*State Papers Dom., James I*, cxv. 13). See article on Hugh Morrell in *Dict. Nat. Biography*.

[1] *Privy Council Register*, Mar. 31, 1639. The companies are the Comb-makers, Hatband-makers, Gutstring-makers, Butchers, Tobacco-pipe-makers, Horners, Spectacle-makers, and Brickmakers.

CHAPTER VI

JOINT-STOCK ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRIAL MONOPOLY

I

Experiments of the new corporations of small masters

THE last chapter was mainly occupied with an account of the economic conditions which gave rise to the movement amongst the small master craftsmen towards the formation of separate industrial organizations to protect the interests of their class; of the political circumstances which favoured the success of that movement; and of some of the more general consequences of the Stuart policy of incorporation which resulted from it. We may now turn to follow in greater detail the inner history of one or two of those corporations, more especially during what has been spoken of as the experimental stage of their development.

in joint-stock enterprise,

That stage follows immediately upon the grant of incorporation, and is occupied with an attempt to use that privilege as a means of securing the objects aimed at in the previous agitation. The industrial monopoly conferred by the charter had the same kind of potential value as a modern patent granted for a new invention; and upon the guarantee thus afforded, the small masters who formed the main body of the new corporation hoped to raise a common fund, which would relieve them of the disadvantages, arising from the smallness of their individual capital, under which they had laboured both in buying their materials and selling the products of their labour.

origins of joint-stock principle in Gild Merchant,

The experiment did not involve the adoption of an entirely new idea; it sprang rather from the gradual adaptation of a method which was as old as the gild form of organization itself. In the Gild Merchant of the thirteenth century a member who had secured a large quantity of an article of common need, was obliged to share his bargain at cost price with the other members who desired to do so[1]; and at a later period this principle in

[1] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. p. 49.

some cases was developed into the form of the 'common town bargain,' under which the purchase was made by the town officials on behalf of the members of the merchant company[1].

and in the Craft Gild,

The Craft Gild frequently adopted a similar arrangement as a means of securing the economic independence and equality of its members. Regulations forbidding the wealthier craftsmen from acquiring large stocks of materials, or compelling them to share their bargains at cost price, or even making it incumbent upon all members to obtain their materials through the officers of the gild so that rich and poor might be served alike, were not uncommonly made by the French and German crafts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries[2].

further developed in later corporations

The tendency, which these regulations were intended to check, of the small master to fall into dependence upon the capital of the wealthier member of his own craft or on that of the outside trades, became much more general in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the new ordinances obtained by the incorporated handicrafts of Paris during the latter half of the sixteenth century, the attempt to overcome this tendency by measures similar to those above described is all but universal. Ordinances were procured, to take the leather trades alone, by the curriers[3] in 1567, by the cordwainers[4] in 1573, by the saddlers in 1577[5], by the skinners in 1586[6], by the girdlers in 1595[7], and by the glovers in 1656[8], the general purpose of which was to secure to each member an equal opportunity of supplying himself with such materials of his craft as were brought into Paris. No member was to intercept such imported merchandise before it had been inspected by the wardens, and these officers were to see that every master received his allotted share. 'All buckles and other ironwork,' says the ordinance of the girdlers, 'made use of in the said trade shall be inspected by the sworn masters of the craft, and marked with its mark in order that they may be allotted amongst the community of masters. No master is to share any allotment of foreign merchandise except for the purpose of making use of it in his shop. He shall

Paris leather crafts

[1] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, i. pp. 135-6 and note.
[2] Giercke, *Das deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht*, i. p. 392; G. Fagniez, *Études sur l'industrie et la classe industrielle à Paris au XIII^e et XIV^e siècle*, p. 110.
[3] Lespinasse, *Les métiers*, iii. p. 323.
[4] Ibid., p. 350.
[5] Ibid., p. 458.
[6] Ibid., p. 377.
[7] Ibid., p. 397.
[8] Ibid., p. 617.

not sell his share to any master girdler or other person for money[1].'

Tudor legislative attacks on middlemen,

In England it was a recognized principle of Tudor legislation that the artificer should have the first claim on the raw materials used in his trade. Not only were restrictions or absolute prohibitions placed for this reason upon the export of wool[2], hides[3], horn[4] and various metals[5]; it was also the constant aim of the legislator to hinder any one from purchasing such materials who was not about to make immediate use of them in industries carried on by himself[6]. The inexpediency and the futility of these attempts to suppress the middleman by the negative process of parliamentary prohibition were coming to be recognized by the beginning of the seventeenth century. Experience had made it sufficiently clear that the function performed by the merchant and the *entrepreneur* could not, if industry was to be allowed its natural expansion, be undertaken by the individual craftsman on his own account. But the hope was still entertained that this increasingly dominant agency might be replaced by the common action and the united capital of an associated body of craftsmen. And this hope was now to be strongly reinforced by the germinations of an idea destined to play a part of immense importance in the future development of industry and commerce. More than two centuries were still to elapse before this idea, that of the Joint-Stock Company, was to succeed in groping its way to effectual realization in the sphere of industry, but its earliest erratic manifestations form one of the most striking features of the economic history of the reign of James I.

replaced by co-operative experiments

The origin of the joint-stock company has been traced back to the formation of associations, in the twelfth century, amongst the holders of public debt in the Italian cities[7]. Out of these, at a much later date, grew up in several cases joint-stock public banks, which were the forerunners of the Bank of England[8]. But the Bank of England and the National Debt did not come into existence till 1694; and nearly a century before this, the joint-stock principle had

[1] Lespinasse, iii. p. 397, Arts. pp. 35-6; cf. Savary, *Dictionnaire du commerce*, article *Lotissement*.

[2] 6 Henry VIII, c. 12. [3] 1 Elizabeth, c. 10; 18 Elizabeth, c. 9.

[4] 4 Edward IV, c. 8; 7 Jac. I, c. 14. [5] 21 Henry VIII, c. 10.

[6] (Wool), 4 Henry VII, c. 11; 22 Henry VIII, c. 1; 5-6 Edward VI, c. 7: (leather), 3-4 Edward VI, c. 6; 5-6 Edward VI, c. 15; 5 Elizabeth, c. 8; 27 Elizabeth, c. 16.

[7] Goldschmidt, *Universalgeschichte des Handelsrechts*, p. 290.

[8] Macleod, *Theory and Practice of Banking*, i. pp. 289-95.

received what was to prove the most famous of all its applications, in the case of the East India Company. The genesis of joint-stock enterprise in foreign trade, of which this company furnishes the leading example, has been accounted for by Professor Schmoller by reference to three pre-existing forms of business organization. The basis was supplied by gilds such as the English Merchant Adventurers, which grew up in the fifteenth century amongst those who carried on trade in the same foreign ports or markets. These bodies received royal grants of privilege, they possessed the power of regulating the activity of their members, and they acquired property for use in common; but each member traded with his own stock at his own risk[1]. The second element was contributed by the form of partnership known as 'Commenda,' much used in early Mediterranean trading, by which a merchant remaining at home was enabled to entrust his goods to a skipper or agent, who received part of the profit. This system in its later developments, along with the 'loan on bottomry,' i.e. mortgage of a ship and its cargo, gradually opened a way for the investment of the capital of persons not professionally engaged in trade[2]. If to a combination of these two elements there is added the principle of equal transferable shares and of management by representative shareholders, we have something that corresponds fairly closely to the joint-stock trading company of the seventeenth century[3].

This construction is hypothetical. The elements combined and the result achieved are in each case historic facts, but the connexion between them remains to be substantiated by further evidence. The assumption, however, that the earlier gild of traders supplied the basis for the later joint-stock company rests upon solid historical ground. In the case of the East India Company the transition may in fact be clearly traced from the one form of organization to the other. An element of joint-stock was already to be found in the collective property of the gild of traders. The tendency of the members to form themselves into groups, each pursuing a common venture, marked another stage of development. Next, all the members are found uniting their resources in one purse and common stock for the purpose of a single voyage; then for a number of voyages; and finally the stock

[1] Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., i. p. 417.
[2] Ashley, *Economic History*, Pt. II, pp. 412–22.
[3] Schmoller, *Die geschichtliche Entwickelung der Unternehmung*, xiii. p. 3, in *Jahrbuch*, xvii.

becomes a permanent fund made up of transferable shares, and the management falls into the hands of a select body of the largest shareholders [1].

Such success as was achieved by early joint-stock enterprises in foreign trade (and there were a great number of failures) was due to the measure of monopoly secured to them by the support of the State. Writing in 1776, Adam Smith held that the only trades which a joint-stock company could carry on successfully without an exclusive privilege were those that could be reduced to routine, such as banking, insurance, making and maintaining canals, and water-supply [2]. And it was not till the middle of the eighteenth century that the technical and economic conditions came into existence, which made it practicable to apply the methods of joint-stock enterprise to industry at large [3]. The lateness of this development has tended to obscure the fact that the earliest joint-stock experiments were as much concerned with industry as with commerce. It will be seen by what follows that the industrial organizations of the sixteenth and seventeenth century supplied a basis to those experiments of exactly the same kind as that furnished by the merchant companies.

II

Corporate administration of charitable bequests,

The starting-point of the new development is to be found in the rights of corporate ownership acquired by the older livery companies in the course of the fifteenth century. Property in land was then the natural, and indeed the only safe form of collective investment, and almost as soon as they were empowered by charter, the companies began to acquire by legacy or by purchase those estates which form the basis of their present wealth. The income derived from this property was mainly devoted to purely charitable purposes, the relief of the poor or the infirm, the support of widows and orphans. But as time went on, it became not uncommon for a successful merchant, remembering his own early struggles, to make a bequest with the object of supplying loans without interest to young tradesmen in want of capital [4].

leads to business investments of corporate capital

Apart from the property thus held in trust for a specified object, the companies often possessed a stock of cash in

[1] Cunningham, ii. p. 255 et seq.
[2] Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, v. c. 1.
[3] Cunningham, ii. p. 816.
[4] Leonard, *Early History of English Poor Relief*, p. 233. See also above, p. 93, n. 3.

their strong boxes, derived from entrance fees, fines, and other sources of income, which might also be employed in benevolent loans; but which was sometimes put out at a substantial interest to the more enterprising and prosperous members [1]. In this way a transition was gradually effected from an investment in land to one in industry or commerce. As, however, the money lent for business purposes passed under the control of the borrower, it was, so far, only the investment in land that was actually administered by the corporation itself.

and to collective purchase of materials, as in Pewterers' Company

A considerable step forward in the process we are tracing was therefore made when the company began to employ its stock in the purchase of materials for its members. As early as 1482, the Pewterers' Company is recorded as having 'bought xi pieces of tyn weighing xxxj^{c} xiij^{lbs} att xxiiij^{s} the C,' the total cost being £37 7*s.*, and the profit on the sale to members amounting to £4 1*s.* 1*d.*, or more than 11 per cent.[2] This transaction does not represent an attempt to replace the usual agencies of supply, but simply arose from the desire to find a profitable employment for the capital which the company happened to have at its disposal, whilst at the same time perhaps serving the convenience of poorer members. That the individual members continued as a rule to supply themselves, is evident from a regulation of 1555, forbidding any one to buy Cornish tin without demanding a certain allowance on every piece for 'scrap'[3]. In 1560–1, however, it was agreed that 'four honest men of the Company shall have the buying of all such bargains of tynne as hereafter shalbe by any manner of means come to any of the Company by Brokership or any other shift, and the party shall send the broker or other party to one of the said foure, and they by theire good advice shall make bargain in the name of the Company, and the tynne shall be kept in the hall to be sold . . . and none to buy other tyn till it be sold[4].'

The rise of the tin monopoly

Even this arrangement for collective bargaining apparently only related to exceptional opportunities. Most of the tin used in the trade was probably still obtained by individual dealings with the London merchants. The haberdashers, who acted as middlemen to so many of the London handicrafts, appear to have supplied the pewterers with their materials in this way[5]. But towards the end of

[1] See above, p. 45; cf. Herbert, *Twelve Great Livery Companies*, i. p. 286; ii. pp. 272, 620.
[2] C. Welch, *History of the Pewterers' Company*, i. p. 55.
[3] Ibid., i. p. 194. [4] Ibid., i. p. 217. [5] Ibid., i. p. 268; ii. p. 10.

Elizabeth's reign the trade in tin fell into the hands of monopolists, to whom the Crown farmed out its prior right of purchase (pre-emption); and this condition of things continued, with brief intervals, down to the time of the Civil War[1]. In face of this monopoly the kind of bargaining contemplated in the ordinance of 1560 no longer served any purpose. Unless the pewterers could procure the suspension of the monopoly, the only alternatives left to them were either to get it into their own hands, or to establish their right as manufacturers to a portion of the material of their trade on special terms. And as a matter of fact they tried each of these three methods in turn.

leads to the formation of a syndicate of rich pewterers,

A temporary suspension of the monopoly was brought about by the reforming zeal of James I on his accession[2]. But although the pewterers' records speak of their now being free to buy their tin as they had previously done, they go on to deal with the necessity of raising three or four thousand pounds for the contentment of the tinners[3]. The reason of this was that the monopolists had been in the habit of advancing money to the tinners to cover wages and other costs of production; and, if the pewterers were to deal in tin to advantage, they must be prepared to do the same. As, however, the Pewterers' Company did not possess a collective capital adequate to so large a transaction, the speculation had to be left in the hands of a small group of wealthy members, who formed a co-partnership for that purpose with the approval of the executive[4].

who deal in tin as a commercial speculation

It is obvious that such an arrangement differed very widely from the collective purchase of materials for the general use, which was the object of the previous regulations. The merchants who advanced the capital for this speculative enterprise would not feel bound to reserve the tin for industrial purposes, if it should prove more profitable to export it as raw material, or in a semi-manufactured state. Conflicts naturally arose between the trading masters and the working masters on this point. As a concession to the latter, a tax was levied on all the tin

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, vol. 1215, fols. 226–30.

[2] *State Papers Dom., James I*, ii. 4, 5; ix. 75. The grant of monopoly was renewed in 1606 in spite of the protests of the pewterers; ibid., xxiii. 56, 57.

[3] Ibid., *James I*, vi. 78; also *Warrant Book*, p. 105, Feb. 29, 1604.

[4] C. Welch, *Pewterers*, ii. p. 37; *State Papers Dom.*, Sept. 25, 1604, (vol. 1603–10).

exported by the traders, the proceeds of which were to be applied to the benefit of the poorer members[1]; and on several occasions a mandate was obtained from the Government by the craftsmen, requiring a certain quantity of the tin to be put to industrial purposes[2].

Artisans secure industrial use of material

In the year 1611, when a new term of monopoly was about to be granted, and the merchants in the Pewterers' Company were negotiating to maintain the position they had acquired in the tin market, a counter petition was presented to the King by a body of workmen pewterers, headed by the son of a former beadle of the company, asking that the farmers of tin 'should deliver forth fourscore thousand weight of tynne to be wrought into pewter by the workmen of the company and the same by them so wrought to be taken back by the farmers to be transported or otherwise sould at their pleasures[3].' Such a proposal will seem less extraordinary when it is compared with the similar schemes, to be considered later, of the feltmakers, the clothworkers, and the pinmakers. It supplies a striking illustration of the strength of the prevalent opinion in favour of the protection of national industries by the Government. The petition of the workmen was not granted, but its effect is seen in the answer made to the application of the trading pewterers. They were to have at a fixed price from the 'farmers' as much tin as they could work, but if any were found to be secretly exported, the price was to be raised; and none were 'to fetch up such tin but such as were shopkeepers and those which worked it either themselves or by their servants and workmen[4].'

Further collective purchase by the company

On this occasion there is no mention of a purchase of tin out of the corporate stock, for the use of its members generally. But in 1615, the company agreed to venture £800, along with £7,000 which had been raised amongst a dozen of its members, for the purpose of securing the monopoly for five years[5]; and the portion of tin represented by this sum was presumably allotted to the poorer members at cost price. The company continued to purchase a stock of tin with this object. A committee, on which both livery and yeomanry were represented, was appointed in 1620 to superintend the allotment[6]. From the year

[1] Welch, ii. pp. 35, 51. [2] Ibid., ii. p. 55. [3] Ibid., ii. p. 58.
[4] Ibid., ii. p. 58. Further complaints were made in 1622; see *State Papers Dom., James I*, cxxviii, 111.
[5] See Ibid., Jan. 19, 1615 (vol. 1611–18, p. 270).
[6] Welch, ii. p. 78. In 1621 the pewterers promoted a Bill in

1635 an account was kept in the company's books of the amount of tin received by each member; and to the cost price was added 6*d.* or 1*s.* per cwt., which went to the profit of the company[1].

But the private joint-stock enterprise is quite distinct from this

It is necessary to distinguish carefully between these smaller purchases of tin made out of the corporate funds for the use of the members generally, and the larger venture which, though made with the approval of the company, was nevertheless a private speculation. The adventuring pewterers all belonged to the ruling class within the corporation, but they could not be legally identified with it. They constituted a separate partnership of a new kind, the uncertain legal status of which is illustrated by the fact that, before the term of its joint action had expired, the majority were engaged in a lawsuit with their leading member. The Joint-Stock Company had in fact gradually separated itself from the organization which had brought it into existence, but it was as yet unconscious of the difficulties involved in the attempt to walk alone[2].

III

Feltmakers' joint-stock enterprise appeals to outside capital

The historical association between these two species of social organization will be still more clearly indicated by some account of the inner development of the feltmakers' corporation during the reign of James I. There are two respects in which the history of the feltmakers serves as an illustration to supplement that of the pewterers. In the case of the latter company, which received its charter as early as 1473, we have seen the gradual upgrowth of the joint-stock principle during a period of a century and a half. The Feltmakers' Company, on the other hand, was not incorporated till the tendency to joint-stock enterprise was already in the ascendant. Indeed that tendency may have been one of the strongest of the forces that brought it into existence. At any rate it provides an illustration of an attempt to apply the joint-stock idea immediately and completely to a newly formed industrial corporation. The other point is perhaps of even greater importance. Whilst the holders of the pewterers' stock were all members of the

Parliament with the object of securing the pre-emption of tin, the right of casting tin into bars and of preventing its export, but it was rejected; *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, iv. p. 121.

[1] Welch, ii. p. 91.

[2] For the further history of the Pewterers' Company, see *Bibliography.*

company, and were probably almost identical with its governing body, the feltmakers, by appealing to the outside world to share in their enterprise, took an entirely new step in the direction of the modern joint-stock company.

The felt-makers' two schemes

The interest of this experiment is enhanced by the fact that it is clearly presented to us at two distinct stages. We have first the draft of an ambitious and thorough-going scheme which, as it would appear, although put before the public, was soon after abandoned as impracticable; and secondly, we have the history of a simpler plan which was actually attempted, but which after a number of years' trial, ended in ignominious failure. The first of these schemes supplies valuable evidence as to the ideals of the small master; and the second and more practical stage of the experiment illustrates in a lively manner the difficulties which hindered the realization of even a moderate instalment of those ideals.

Prospectus of first scheme, origin and motives

Of the documents relating to the earlier scheme the most important corresponds in almost all essentials to the prospectus of a modern company; and is addressed in like manner to the investing public at large. The preamble, which is worth quoting in full, runs as follows:—'The Company of Feltmakers London thereunto moved by sundry mischiefs and miseries they have endured by the Company of Haberdashers of London have resolved for remedie thereof and for Government of the poore of their trade and profytt of such as will come with them therein to buy a Stock or bank of money for the takeing in and buying up of all the wares they make into their own handes which Stocke is projected to be £15,000 to be raysed by themselves and such as will adventure with them.'

Direction of the under-taking

The management is to lie mainly in the hands of members of the company, on account of their experience in the business and because their corporation forms the 'ground of the stock'; but of the twelve or more directors or 'committees whose office will be to view the accompte of the Stocke, and to make lawes and actes for the same,' some are to be chosen from the largest of the outside shareholders, and these may send agents to inspect the company's books from time to time. The method employed for securing the safety of the stock illustrates the material hindrances to an enterprise requiring an accumulation of capital in the days before modern banking with its elaborate machinery of credit, and serves at the same time as an example of a survival from the earlier days of the gild. The strong box secured by a number of keys, a feature

which the modern trade union and the friendly society have also inherited from the gild, was to be the main depository of the company's cash, and the keys were to be 'kept by such as the Company and the other adventurers should mutually allow of.'

Business methods

The staff of paid officials to be employed by the company in the daily management of its business is described with some particularity. There are to be a number of 'agents or warehousemen, able and experienced, to take in the wares which are to be bought at reasonable rates and to sell out the same againe to the profytt of the Stocke; ... a Cashiere to receave the money that comes in weekly by debts etc., to answer the same to the Stock chest upon account every week, to imprest money to the warehousemen to be issued upon hatts,' and a 'Register or Clarke of the Stocke whose office will be to keepe just and true account of the Stocke and of all wares bought and sould and to keepe Court book and entries of Acts and orders for the managing of the said Stocke.'

Legal status

The authors of the project appear to have been fully conscious that their proposal involved a new departure in the forms of industrial association; and to have had some doubts as to the legality of using the corporation as a security and as a working basis for their undertaking. 'That this may be lawfully undertaken,' concludes the prospectus, 'and that the freemen of London may joyne with the Company, yt hath binne resolved by learned Counsell yt may ... Yf therefore any man be desyrous to joyne with them in adventure here is security sufficient for his Stocke and an assured profytt for his principall[1].'

Economic aims

More important, however, than the formal constitution of the project are the economic results which it was intended to produce. The feltmakers complained that all the disadvantages of an imperfectly organized market fell upon their shoulders. Felt-making has always been a 'season trade,' i. e. subject to regular fluctuations of demand. In a hat factory at the present day, there is probably nearly twice as much work actually completed for sale in a busy month as in a slack month; and the capital of the manufacturer only partially serves to equalize the rate of production by keeping a number of work-people engaged in making half-finished goods for stock. To the master feltmaker of the early seventeenth century even this partial remedy was not open. When the demand slackened he was obliged to dispose of his goods to the merchant on

[1] *British Museum, Cotton MSS.*, Titus, B. v. 319.

credit, or if he was too poor to wait for his money, to take the best price he could get from the wandering chapman who supplied the wants of the country-side. The aim of the new project was to provide a market where the craftsman could always dispose of his wares for ready money, and where the merchant could obtain a supply on credit if necessary, from a large and varied stock of guaranteed quality. It is very unlikely that such an ambitious scheme could have been put forward without the suggestion and co-operation of the company promoter, and the activity of this new class in the business world is a marked feature of the period. But the acceptance of it by the majority of the new corporation, who, according to the prospectus, had agreed to bring in their wares to the stock, shows that it provided expression for the hopes they had formed of securing their independence of the capitalist by co-operation.

Difficulties discussed

The economic defects of such a scheme lie so clearly on the surface that it is scarcely necessary to point them out in detail. But that they were not entirely overlooked at the time is sufficiently proved by the following imaginary dialogue, put forward by the projectors in answer to objections raised by the merchants. As it presents a livelier picture than could be afforded by any formal description of the relations subsisting between the small master and the merchant during this period, it is here given in full.

'*Haberdasher.* I pray you let me be somewhat better informed of those projects you have layd in bringing of all the hatts you make to the hall.

'*Feltmaker.* In what particular?

'*Haberdasher.* Namely what benefit yt should be to our company to fetch their wares at the hall. Yt should seem that the Trade being open to buy where wee will and what wee will should be better than restreyned to one place. Alsoe hereby all Country Chapmen shall have as much priviledge as wee.

'*Feltmaker.* Where you now goe daily yourselves or your servaunts into J. R. South Wark, Bridwell and Puddel and cannot get above 6 or 12 in a howse, where att the Hall you may have 100 or 200 douzens at a tyme, yf you please, and your servaunts restrayned of that libertie they have, where, under couller of goeing to those places, they wast your goods in lewd howses and in ill company. And I take this to be good for your company in this respect. For your second demandeth answere that yt cannot be denyed but as now yt is Many Chapmen and those of the best and greatest dealers in England doe buy

wares in all thees places and at those rates you cannot buy them att. For many of our people toe take money will sell it under valew to their men and hold them upp to you. But when all is brought unto the Hall, there shall not one Country Chapman buy a hat there; soe that upon necessity they must be driven to buy of your Company. Which, as now yt is, will never be brought to pas, neither is theer sence for yt that men will buy of you when they may buy of the same men as cheape as you can. But hereby is helpe, yf you can perceeve ytt.

'*Haberdasher.* How can you compas itt that all the hatts which shalbe made shalbe brought to your Hall? Will you or can you give money for all?

'*Feltmaker.* Wee thank God and good friends we hope to be able for to paie money for all unto all that are not able for to beare and unto those that be able at tyme to their good content and ours to(o).

'*Haberdasher.* But what assurance shall they have which be able to give credytt? Who must undertake to see them satisfied?

'*Feltmaker.* Who but the Company and particularly the Stockmasters for the tyme being? Doe not you think that we may as safely put our moneys thus, as formerly we have to dyvers of your Trades? Of some I deny not but truly confes wee have byn both honestly and well dealt withall and of others as badly, which hath byn the overthrow of many feltmakers yett living, whome you know. But I will forbeare to nomynate them for in soe doing I must also name them of your Trade which were the cause of their fall. Unytie we desyre, therefore I will rub no old sores.

'*Haberdasher.* I deny not but indeed thereby the feltmakers shall not run soe great a hazard, as formerly they dyd, and your distrust is that the gayne made by the good men of our Trade will not beare out the losse which may arrise by the badd, is yt not? Which to prevent you hould this more secure.

'*Feltmaker.* Itt is true indeede, that is my meaning.

'*Haberdasher.* But in what manner can you manadge this? Yt is not an easie matter to keep such a multitude of Wares in good order without good meanes and good helpe from such as are of our own Trade and have insight therein, neither will the chardge be small to keep men that will be carefull in taking in, honest in delyvering out, circumspect in their accompte. There cannot be lesse than some four or six to doe this which will arrise to chardges, Therefore I pray tell me how this chardge will be raysed.

'*Feltmaker.* All chardges of officers ys to be defrayed by the stockmasters for the tyme being.

'*Haberdasher.* I deny yt not, yett methinkes they that shall serve our Company out of the Hall will be shrewdly pusseled, and besydes how every man should have content, unlesse that very upright dealing may be had, much wronge may be. For whomsoever they favor shall have the choyse of the Wares, which wilbe to the wronge of the other haberdashers and in the end to the Company of stockmasters.

'*Feltmaker.* All they that take in and delyver out shalbe sworne to lett noe man have his choyse, but to take them as they arrise.

'*Haberdasher.* Why soe, you will force me or any man to buy that wee have noe neede of. For some fashions that will serve other men shall I of chance never sell while wee live. I see littell reason for this.

'*Feltmaker.* You mistake me. I meane that all hatts of one pryse shall stand together, but every fashion of that prise by themselves, so that it shalbe lawful for you to choose your fashion and refuse what you dislike. But having chosen your fashion and nomynated what number you will have, you shall then make no choyse but take them as they rise; and so of every sorte in like manner which you wante. For you shall not be pressed to take any but what you want.

'*Haberdasher.* Soe you will take in Wares hand over head, all that comes good and badd, and as at the Lottery our Company must take theer lott as ytt falls, some worth the money (yt may be) non better, but many worse. What reply you to this?

'*Feltmaker.* Such dilligent care and honest regard shalbe had by the takers in that those wares which are not worth the money and answerable to others of the same sorts shalbe abated and sett with other of a lower prise, and alsoe for any open fault which you fynde that the takers-in have not seene, allowance shalbe made with Reason.

'*Haberdasher.* This may do well, yf promise be kept. I remember that when wee last mett you tould me that your project should be for the good of the Haberdashers, of your selves, the Country Chapmen, and the whole comonwealth—a faire glosse yf the coullor hould, but yett I feare yt (will) not.

'*Feltmaker.* I have not denyed to answere any question you have demanded as yet, neither will I this, but first I pray you lett me oppose a little and doe you answere.

'*Haberdasher.* Doe soe. I am ready.

'*Feltmaker.* You complaine and saye that our Company serves Chapmen in the Country at as reasonable rates as you or better, and that those men dwelling neare to some of your customers eate them upp, by which occasion they breake, and you have the losse.

'*Haberdasher.* It is true we doe soe, and not without cause.

'*Feltmaker.* Then note, by our bringing all to the hall and excluding the country chapmen, the cause of the breach of your customers which dwell by them is taken away, soe all may sell alike and the countrey chapmen buy alike, and men live in Company together as Brethren, and not like great fishes in the sea which eate up the Lesser, and also the Commons shall buy with equallytye whereas now of the decayed men they have the worst and paie dearest for the most parte. And a comfort it must be to all men when they may in market be bould to stand upon yt that his neighboure can doe as hee, and neither better then other.

'*Haberdasher.* You have given me satisfaction. I would the rest of our company would be soe persuaded. And I pray God that all may turne to the best, and soe I ende wishing good to him that well thinketh and shame to him that evill doth.

'*Feltmaker.* Amen say all honest men unto yt.'[1]

Second scheme under the direction of separate 'Stockers'

To the economist or business man of the present day the objections put forward by the haberdasher will appear more convincing than the buoyant optimism of the felt-maker's answers. And in fact, the difficulties seem to have been great enough to prevent the project ever getting beyond this prospective stage. It was, however, almost immediately followed by another of a less ambitious kind. To take over and dispose of the whole of the varied product of the felt-making industry in London was an undertaking of unprecedented scope and complexity. But there were precedents enough for the simpler scheme of raising a stock to supply the small master with materials; and an enterprise with this object was set on foot in 1611, with a capital of £5,000, or only one third of the sum which had previously been sought to be raised. The new project was marked by a further difference of essential importance. In the former scheme the feltmakers' corporation was to have supplied, not only the framework for the administration of the undertaking, but also the security for its solvency. The stockers and shareholders in the wool-buying venture were to constitute an entirely separate concern. Some of them,

[1] *Cotton MSS.*, Titus, B. v. 118. Cf. below, pp. 240–2.

no doubt, were members of the Feltmakers' Company. They were to hire the feltmakers' hall for the transaction of their business; and even to allow the Company a penny in the pound of their profits. The feltmakers as a body, however, did not consider themselves responsible for the undertaking, and at a later period they sought to prove that they had no share whatever in its transactions; although, unhappily for them, they failed to establish this to the satisfaction of the Court of Chancery.

But the feltmakers invest money with the stockers

It appears that when the new enterprise was started, the feltmakers being anxious, like the pewterers on a similar occasion a few years later, to embark some capital in it for the collective benefit of their corporation, and having no available funds of their own, borrowed £500 from Lord Harrington, who appears in public several times as their patron and protector. Soon afterwards this loan was recalled, and some means had to be found of replacing it. The feltmakers at this time were in want of a clerk, and the expedient was hit upon of offering the post with a salary of £30 a year as an inducement to some one with £500 to invest[1]. The clerk who was appointed on these conditions subsequently declared that his loan of £500 was made to the feltmakers in their corporate capacity; whilst the feltmakers argued that he had invested it in the wool-buying concern as one of the stockers. The matter of the appointment and of the investment was managed by members of the feltmakers' governing body who were also stockers, and it is not improbable that the clerk was intentionally misled by them. The feltmakers admitted that they had allowed the stockers to use the name of their corporation 'in trust for raising of the stock,' and that, in consideration of this, they had received a dividend out of one year's profits. What is at any rate certain is that the confusion between the feltmakers' corporation and the joint-stock enterprise came very near involving the former in the ruin of the latter.

and are collectively involved in their collapse

The undertaking collapsed within three years, and when the feltmakers' clerk failed to get any satisfaction out of the stockers more immediately responsible, one of whom died in prison, he entered a fresh suit against the company, and in 1623 obtained a verdict in Chancery to the effect that the master, wardens and feltmakers had borrowed the five

[1] It seems to have been not unusual for City Companies to make some such arrangement with their clerk; see *State Papers Dom., James I*, xli. 56 for an agreement made with the Farriers' Company in 1617.

hundred pounds 'in their politique capacity as a corporation and did imploy the same in stocke with the stockers as their particular stocke,' and that they must therefore repay this sum with interest at 5 per cent., making a total of £760. The effect of this verdict was to render the individual feltmakers, many of whom were poor men, liable to imprisonment for debt, so that they could not carry on their trade for fear of arrest. When the Master of the Feltmakers ventured to the House of Commons to prefer a Bill for the relief of the Company, he was arrested in the precincts of Parliament and thrown into the Fleet. The Commons, indignant at this invasion of their privileges, ordered that the feltmakers under arrest should be set free to prosecute their Bill which passed the lower house, but was blocked in the Lords[1]. The Feltmakers' Company survived this crisis as we have already seen, to meet with further trials in the following reign, but the experience they had undergone appears to have effectually quenched their aspirations towards joint-stock enterprise.

Imprisonment and release of feltmakers

IV

Connexion between joint-stock enterprise and monopoly

At first sight it may seem as if there could be little connexion between the co-operative experiments we have been considering, and the industrial monopolies which were in the hands of individual capitalists, or were taken over, as was sometimes the case, by the Crown itself. In significance for the history of industrial organization these two sets of phenomena differ widely from each other. But they occupy common ground as being both attempts to solve, though in a different spirit, the problem of the inadequacy of the capital possessed by the small master. Since the failure of the joint-stock experiments was largely due to the want of the legal machinery and business organization necessary to secure the responsible administration of collective capital, it might be supposed a more hopeful plan for a body of small masters to make a corporate agreement with an individual capitalist who could not only supply their needs, but represent their interests in his own person.

Pinmakers' Company tries to exclude imported pins

In the history of the Pinmakers' Company, this principle of dependence upon a single person is gradually carried to its logical conclusions. The importation of foreign pins

[1] *Hist. MSS. Third Rep.*, p. 33 (*Lords' Calendar*, May 20, 1624); *House of Commons Journals*, Apr. 14, 24, May 12, 19, 1624; *Lords' Journals*, iii. p. 393.

had been prohibited by law since the reign of Edward IV[1], but as the English supply was far from equal to the demand, Dutch pins had been continually imported in large quantities, partly in defiance of the prohibition, and partly by virtue of special exemptions. The commercial interest, which as we have seen predominated in the London companies of Elizabeth's reign, was strongly in favour of free trade, and the industrial interest, which might have profited by the exclusion of foreign pins, possessed no organization capable of enforcing prohibition. On the accession of James I, however, the same influences whose operation we have already traced in the cases of the feltmakers and the glovers, led the pinmakers, who had previously been absorbed in the Girdlers' Company, to aim at establishing a separate corporation in defence of their interests. As they had not sufficient capital to cover the expense of obtaining a charter, they were induced to make a compact with the courtier who performed this service, to the effect that he should receive a toll of fourpence for every 12,000 pins made by the company for forty years[2]. The advantage which the pinmakers hoped would more than compensate for the tax thus laid on themselves, was the exclusion of foreign pins.

The policy of protection discussed

Sir Thomas Bartlett, another courtier who had taken up their case, had already commenced a prosecution against an English merchant named Ellis, for importing pins; and out of this test case arose a long controversy between the pinmakers and their friends at Court on the one side, and the Dutch merchants, the Haberdashers' Company and the City Council on the other[3]. The pinmakers asserted that their trade found work for 20,000 impotent people (some even without legs), that the Dutch were flooding the country with the products of subsidized and pauper labour at a low price, with a view to crushing out the English industry and then securing a monopoly, and 'that it is and always hath been the policy of this nation (and as we take it of all others) to prohibit the invection of such forraigne made wares as are made in our own country.' To which the merchants replied that the English pinmakers could not supply more than a third of the demand, that to exclude the Dutch pins would cause a corresponding diminution in our exports to Holland besides provoking retaliation, and

[1] 3 Edward IV, c. 4.

[2] *State Papers Dom., James I*, April 16, 1605, p. 211; Ibid., *Charles I*, cccc. 87.

[3] *Index to Remembrancia*, p. 521; *State Papers Dom.*, xxvi. 22, 100.

that the prohibition asked for would be creating a real present monopoly in order to avert a future and imaginary monopoly[1]. The Privy Council in 1608 put an end to the question for a time by a compromise. The merchants arranged to find a market for the English pins, and the foreign pins were allowed to come in on paying a duty of sixpence per 12,000[2].

Industrial movement towards protection and monopoly

So tame a solution as this was not likely to satisfy the temper of the time. The air was full of projects for encouraging national industries, in which the Crown was to bless the union of the aspiring master craftsman with the speculative capitalist by the grant of a monopoly. The working pewterers had been aiming at this kind of arrangement in 1611; the joint-stock project of the feltmakers was set on foot in 1612; the year 1613 saw the beginnings of Alderman Cockayne's syndicate to develop and monopolize the finishing and dyeing of cloth; and in 1614 Sir Thomas Bartlett was again busy in the cause of the pinmakers. The pinmakers had begun to realize that it was not enough for them to agitate for the exclusion of foreign pins. In order to gain full advantage of their monopoly, they must have capital enough to supply themselves with abundant material to pay for all their own pins that were awaiting a market, and to buy up the imported pins as well.

Intervention of the capitalist

A joint-stock scheme similar to that of the feltmakers had already been mooted amongst the craftsmen, and Sir Thomas was anxious not to be forestalled[3]. As carver-in-ordinary to the Queen, he had amassed a fortune of £40,000, for which he desired to find a profitable investment. On the last day of 1614 he wrote to Sir R. Winwood, requesting his influence towards obtaining a royal grant to the pinmakers which would enable him to place his capital at their disposal, and he offered £4,000 as a token of his gratitude if he obtained the favour[4]. He followed this up by starting a fresh prosecution against Ellis, and thus reopened the whole controversy[5].

Government fails

In April 1616 the Privy Council made another attempt at mediation. The pinmakers were not to hinder the

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii. 62.
[2] *Index to Remembrancia*, p. 522.
[3] *State Papers Dom., James I*, lxxx. 5. Bartlett afterwards speaks of his project as 'rendering to your Majesty the whole profit made by Commerce in that affair, onlie reserving to himself a small part of £3,000 yearlie in respect of his former estate endeavour and long suffering.'
[4] *State Papers Dom., James I*, lxxviii. 81.
[5] *Index to Remembrancia*, p. 520.

importation of foreign pins; but, as long as they followed the patterns supplied to them and made the pins of as good stuff and for as reasonable a price as the foreign pins, the traders were to take all they made week by week, and to pay for them within the week. Two haberdashers were to be appointed by the traders, and two girdlers by the pinmakers to settle disputes[1]. This arrangement did not last three months. In June the pinmakers complained that the haberdashers had not carried out their part of the agreement, and received permission from the Privy Council to help themselves by course of law[2].

to harmonize industrial and commercial interests

Accordingly, in November, they placed themselves in the hands of Sir Thomas Bartlett, who proceeded to buy out for £8,000 the other courtier interested in the business, and devoted the rest of his fortune to the financing of the monopoly. He agreed to supply the pinmakers with wire, and to take their pins from them at fixed rates[3]. But of course the feasibility of the arrangement entirely depended on his ability to control the importation of foreign pins. To exclude them altogether was impossible, since the company was confessedly incapable of supplying the whole demand. What Sir Thomas aimed at, therefore, was to complete his monopoly by obtaining a grant of the sole right of importation. In the face of the natural opposition of the merchants this grant was not achieved till March, 1618[4], and in October of the same year, it was hedged about with considerable restrictions. The company was not to raise the prices of English pins beyond those prevalent twenty years before, nor the prices of foreign pins beyond those of two years before. The monopoly was only to extend to London and its suburbs, and the merchants were to be free to deal in pins made in any other part of the kingdom.

The pin monopoly financed by Sir T. Bartlett

Even this limited degree of monopoly proved in a short time to be impracticable. Although Sir Thomas was successful in obtaining a verdict against the importers who infringed his patent, the Government found it expedient, in the interests of friendly commercial relations with Holland, to forbid the judgement to be executed[5]. The pinmakers,

proves a failure

[1] *Privy Council Register*, April 21, 1616, fol. 234; *State Papers Dom., James I*, lxxxvi. 146.
[2] *Privy Council Register*, June 16, 1616, fol. 300.
[3] Ibid., Nov. 20, 1616, fol. 458; *Index to Remembrancia*, p. 522.
[4] *State Papers Dom., James I*, vol. 1611–19, pp. 532, 557 (*Sign Manual*, ix. No. 6, and *Proclamation Coll.* No. 58); xcviii. 34.
[5] *Privy Council Register*, Oct. 23, 1618; Mar. 21, 1619.

thus deprived of the protection upon which the agreement had been based, were unable to carry out their part of the bargain; and Sir Thomas, driven to desperation, made himself so troublesome to the Government that in the end he was committed to the Tower, and shortly afterwards died[1].

but is revived under Charles I,

After this collapse the monopoly remained in abeyance till 1635. About that time the Government of Charles I began to give to this discredited method of raising revenue an even wider application than it had received under James I. A certain Mr. Lydsey undertook on behalf of Sir Thomas Bartlett's heirs to recover some of the fortune he had sunk in the pinmaking business. A fresh grant was bestowed, in return for an engagement to pay the sum of £500 annually to the Queen[2]. Three years later Lydsey, who was entangled in a lawsuit with Bartlett's heirs on a charge of breach of trust, professed to have sunk £7,000 more in the fatal enterprise.

in connexion with the wire monopoly,

This crisis led the King to assume a new relation to the undertaking. In March, 1640, following the precedent he had made previously in the matter of the playing-card monopoly, he accepted the rôle of *entrepreneur*. It was not merely the interests of the pin manufacture that called for intervention. Lydsey had taken in hand the pin monopoly because of his interest in the Royal Battery Works, another privileged industry, which supplied the wire. The pinmakers, if left to themselves, would have preferred foreign wire which made better pins. It was necessary to harmonize these two jarring monopolies by subordinating them both to a higher conception of mercantile policy. The possibility of maintaining a steady market for unsatisfactory English wire was dependent on the possibility of guaranteeing a regular demand for unsatisfactory English pins. It seemed a natural inference from this that the King, who alone had the power to exclude competition in each of these industries, should assume the function of regulating their mutual relations, and, in return for the protection thus afforded, should enjoy some of the profit due to the middleman and *entrepreneur*.

and both are taken under the direction of the King

Under the terms of a contract, recorded in the Privy Council Register, the King agreed to furnish the pinmakers with a stock of £10,000 to be deposited in the hands of an agent, and to be employed in buying pins at the prices expressed in the schedule; also to provide the company

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccc. 87.
[2] Ibid., cccii. 122.

with a hall, and to supply them with 'merchantable' wire at £8 a hundredweight; whilst the pinmakers on their part engaged to use no other wire than that so supplied, without the permission of the King's agent. At the same time the King made a covenant with Mr. Lydsey to take off yearly from him for ten years so much wire as should be necessary for the use of the kingdom, and to pay for it in ready money at £6 12*s.* the hundredweight. An allowance of 10*s.* a hundredweight was to be made to Lydsey for all imported wire seized by the King to his own use. What the King undertook to do was, therefore, to combine the functions which Sir Thomas Bartlett had endeavoured to perform for the pinmaking industry with a similar relation to the wire manufacture. But the King had no intention of sinking a fortune in the business as Sir Thomas Bartlett had done. He was in great financial straits, and the only assets which he had available for investment were the royal credit and the royal prerogative. All the functions he had assumed were therefore to be farmed out to a capitalist named Halstead, who was to take over all the King's engagements to the pinmakers and to the wire industry, and who after paying expenses of management and allowing himself 8 per cent. on his capital, was to pay £1,000 every year to the Exchequer. Out of what was still left of the profits when these payments had been made, the £7,000 which had been sunk by Lydsey in the pin business was to be repaid with interest; and any remainder was to go to the King. Halstead was to render a regular account to the Treasury, and at the expiration of his ten years' lease, the King was to have the right, on payment of the capital invested with interest, to take back the whole business into his own hands[1].

Further attempts at monopoly under Charles II

The almost immediate outbreak of the Civil War must have prevented this arrangement from having a serious trial; but soon after the Restoration a similar plan received the approval of Charles II[2]. This time, however, it was thought necessary to have the contract confirmed by Parliament; and the Bill introduced for that purpose in 1664 met with strenuous opposition from the representatives of both commerce and industry. The haberdashers and the ironmongers petitioned the House of Commons more than once against the Bill[3]; and the wiredrawers held a meeting at which one of their members declared with great warmth

[1] *Privy Council Register*, Mar. 18, 1640, xvii. Pt. I, fol. 376.
[2] *State Papers Dom., Charles II*, lxxix. 120, xci. 95.
[3] *Hist. MSS. Seventh Rep.*, p. 179; *Lords' Calendar*, Jan. 28, 1664.

that the last King lost his head by granting such patents[1]. The Bill was dropped, but the promoters of the scheme continued to urge their case with the Privy Council, where they were met once more by the objections of the traders. In 1675, the year in which Charles II prorogued Parliament before the grant of supplies and bargained for a French subsidy, the Pinmakers' Company renewed the proposals which, they explained, 'had previously come to naught in consequence of the Great Plague and the Dutch,' and the acceptance of which would secure to the King a revenue of at least £4,000 a year[2].

and under William III. Pinmakers' argument for free trade

A final attempt was made by the Pinmakers' Company in 1690 to gain the sanction of Parliament for their monopoly, which was now, of course, to be managed without the participation of the King. It is very significant of the progress that had been made by this time towards the practical recognition of the advantages of free trade, that the main opposition to the measure appears to have come from a body of the pinmakers themselves. They declared that the industry was in no need of such protection, that there was a large export trade in pins, and that the manufacture was only to be improved by the free exercise thereof. The Bill before Parliament would destroy this by setting up a gross monopoly, which must inevitably reduce the pinmakers to the same bad condition as the cardmakers had been brought to by a renewal of their monopoly under Charles II. It would serve, in short, to enhance prices, to perpetuate the small master with his bad conditions of employment and inferior methods of production, and to encourage the restriction of output[3].

Effects of monopoly on the status of the workman

The language of this successful protest against the revival of monopoly is entirely justified by all we know of the history of the Pinmakers' Company. Although established nominally for the benefit of the craftsman, the monopoly had had the effect of undermining his status. Apprentices were multiplied without limit, as many as thirty to each master being suggested in 1617[4]; and a great number of women and children were employed, who were not apprenticed[5]. The organizations which, in other cases like those of the feltmakers and the clothworkers, furnished

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles II*, xciii. 60–1.
[2] *Hist. MSS. Ninth Rep.*, p. 451.
[3] *The Pinmakers' Case in opposition to Mr. Killigew's Bill*, 1690. British Museum, 816 m. 13/89.
[4] *Index to Remembrancia*, p. 523.
[5] *Harleian MSS.*, 6842, 69.

through their handicraft traditions a protection to the workman, were dominated in the case of the monopolist companies by the influence of the speculative capitalist, who was as little inclined to maintain the best industrial conditions as is the modern shareholder when dealing with unorganized labour.

The industrial monopolies, therefore, which had always been felt as a burden by the consumer, received an equally severe condemnation from the standpoint of the producer. It is an interesting coincidence to find this practical refutation of mercantilist ideas coming from the industry which was presently to furnish to the greatest of economic theorists his most classical illustration of the advantages of free industrial development.

CHAPTER VII

PROTECTIONISM UNDER JAMES I

Absolutism essential to full development of mercantilism

THE 'mercantile system' achieved its completest practical embodiment in the French policy as directed or inspired by Colbert during the latter half of the seventeenth century. In Germany it found a later exponent of equal genius in Frederick the Great[1]; but the circumstances were no longer so apt, and the Prussian mercantilism leaves the impression on the historical student of something born out of due time. Of English mercantilism the opposite is true. Geographical situation favoured the ripening in England earlier than elsewhere of the idea of a self-contained and aggressive economic nationalism. But to the full realization of this idea the essential political condition was an absolutist government, supported by an ubiquitous bureaucracy, and untrammelled in the formation of its plans by representative institutions, or in the execution of them by the recalcitrancy of local self-government[2]. This condition, which was satisfied in the France of Louis XIV and the Prussia of Frederick, was never fully attained in England. But there were moments when its attainment must have seemed almost within reach; since nothing short of this was the dream of Bacon's political philosophy, and the strenuous aim of the policy of Strafford. It was therefore at the period when this political ideal seemed to approach its fulfilment, that English mercantilism became a force in practical affairs, and it was with the overthrow of that ideal that it lost its golden opportunity.

The views and policy of Bacon

Of the closeness of the connexion thus indicated, the career of Lord Bacon will serve to furnish an illustration. The services of that great genius to the cause of science were not due to any new insight into nature's actual operations, but to the stimulating effect of his untiring curiosity, his largeness of conception and his boldness of

[1] See Schmoller, *Das Merkantilsystem*, in his '*Umrisse und Untersuchungen*.'

[2] Cunningham, *Growth*, &c, 3rd edit., pp. 19, 247.

speculation upon the thought of his own and of succeeding generations. But these high gifts of imagination, which are of the utmost value in the theoretical sphere, are apt to involve grave perils when they are exercised in human affairs, unless they are constantly restrained by an informing and a chastening sense of moral proportion; and the lack of this sense was the fatal defect alike of Bacon's character and of his statesmanship. 'His thoughts were constantly occupied,' says Gardiner, 'with the largest and most sweeping plans of reform. . . . The union with Scotland, the civilization of Ireland, the colonization of America, the improvement of the law . . . were only a few of the vast schemes upon which his mind loved to dwell. With such views as these, it was but natural that Bacon should fix his hopes upon the Sovereign and his Council rather than upon the House of Commons. . . . He had always before him the idea of the variety of cases in which the Government might be called on to act, and he allowed himself to believe that it would be better qualified to act rightly if it were not fettered by strict rules. . . . He left out of his calculations . . . the inevitable tendencies to misgovernment which beset all bodies of men who are possessed of irresponsible power. The very largeness of his view led him to regard with complacency actions from which a smaller mind would have shrunk at once[1].' In the political atmosphere represented by this attitude of mind, Colbertism is a natural and almost an inevitable growth. Accordingly we find Bacon not only defending the royal prerogative of taxation, but giving as Chancellor the highest legal sanction to commercial and industrial monopoly, and taking a warm interest in the fantastic scheme, which we shall have later to consider, for forcing English manufactures on the unwilling foreigner.

represent a political atmosphere favourable to Colbertism

But this political atmosphere does not of itself afford an adequate explanation of the protectionist movement, which culminated in the middle of the reign of James I. There were at least two other important contributory causes of which account should be taken. The first of these was the development of organized interests in industry and commerce; and the second was the relation of England to the international market, and the influence upon English opinion of the policy and the attitude of continental nations.

Other contributory conditions

It need hardly be said that the 'national economy,' which the sixteenth century had brought to completion, had

Survival of the restrictionist spirit,

[1] Gardiner, *Hist. of England*, ii. pp. 191–9.

inherited a large measure of the protectionist spirit in the traditions of the industrial and commercial organizations, which had been taken over from the narrower local economies now absorbed and incorporated in the national framework. The exclusiveness of these organizations had been modified in part by legislative action, and still more by the influence of purely economic forces; but the power of vested interests and the dislike of competition are apt to linger long in the midst of a world quite different from that which gave them birth. The faculty of ready self-adaptation to changing circumstances is more naturally acquired in commerce than in industry; and it is amongst the more enterprising members of the mercantile class that there is commonly generated the courage and the enlightened self-interest which dictate a policy of freer trade. We may therefore measure the power of the protectionist spirit by the degree of its survival in this class.

illustrated by merchants' complaints of competition

The complaint of the merchants trading to Spain supplies an example full of unconscious humour. They were much troubled, it appears, by reason of a number of shopkeepers' and retailers' servants, never brought up as merchants, who were sent out as factors, and who 'by their unskillful practice much prejudiced the exercised merchant.' Besides these there were the Northern and Devonshire clothiers, the makers of the new drapery and the hosiers, who, instead of being content to serve the merchants as they used to do, had made it their business to be informed of the demands of the Spanish market, so that they could supply it directly. But unauthorized competition of this simple character was not the worst from which the Spanish merchants had to suffer. The linendraper, they said, having disposed of his best goods in England, 'sendeth his remainders over into Spain, *seeking rather vent than profit*.' Tobacco, again, as His Majesty well knew, was not only a needless but a hurtful commodity, and the Spanish merchants bearing this duly in mind had been accustomed to get it for next to nothing. But the tobacco merchants were now so eager to buy this noxious weed that 'they cared not almost what price they gave'; and what was still worse, they took out good English cloth in exchange, and in their blind desire for trade actually sold it at 10 or 20 per cent. below cost price. And this strange conduct on the part of the tobacco merchants was said to be shared by the vintners, grocers, salters, sugar-bakers, and dyers of London, who, having turned Spanish merchants on their

own account, exported the native and best commodities of England at or below cost price, and then helped themselves again by their returns of wines, fruits, oils, sugars, indigo, cochineal, and such-like wares, on which they made a handsome profit. The conclusion which the complainants wished to enforce, by citing these sad examples of commercial immorality, was that the trade in which so much unlawful profit was being made by outsiders should be henceforth strictly confined to themselves [1].

Growth of industrial capital

Such being the attitude of the merchants, we shall hardly hope to find the manufacturers alive to the advantages of free trade. For a century past there had been a steady growth of the capital invested in the larger forms of industry. This had in part been effected by a transference of capital hitherto employed in commercial enterprise. In earlier times the capitalist of the towns was, as we have seen, mainly a trader. Such industrial capital as existed was distributed in small quantities amongst the masters of the various crafts. But as trade became national and even international in its scope, the local trader was often driven, by the competition of the larger merchant from a distance, to fall back upon an alliance with industry, and by identifying himself with the cause of local monopoly, to obtain a more profitable investment for his capital. Supported by the municipal authorities, and sanctioned by a central government alarmed at the threatened decay of the towns, industrial corporations were formed, with the object partly of exploiting the freer manufactures of the country districts and partly of hindering their further development. Similar companies, representing industries which had their chief seat in the capital, attempted to acquire a monopoly of the whole national production, or at any rate to procure authority to supervise and restrain any production carried on elsewhere [2]. The natural tendency of such monopolies was towards a form of organization resembling the modern cartel or trust. In proportion as they approached a complete control of production, it was almost inevitable that they should seek to regulate, in their own interest, the cost of materials, the price of the product, and the volume of the output [3].

and its tendency to organize a monopoly

An illustration from Würtemberg

The earlier Craft Gilds had sometimes entertained these aims within their narrower limits. In the wider national field, to which the seventeenth-century corporation now transferred them, they did not, as a rule, achieve any

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii. 51.

[2] See below, p. 204.

[3] Welch, *Pewterers' Company*, i. p. 250.

considerable measure of success. But the tendency, which for the moment concerns us more than its results, was general throughout Western Europe. At Calw in Würtemberg, for example, an association of dyers and exporters of cloth was formed in 1622, which bought the cloth for its members, and distributed the profits to them, whilst each member carried on the amount of production assigned to him by the company in his own separate establishment [1].

Close connexion of this tendency with a policy of Protection,

The close connexion between such forms of industrial organization and a policy of protection need hardly be pointed out. As they had their origin in the narrower protectionism of the town economy, so they assisted to produce and tended to accentuate the national protectionism of the seventeenth century. The modern trust has no legal sanction; any monopoly it may enjoy has to be acquired by the power of an unauthorized combination wielding purely economic forces [2]. The corporate monopoly of the Stuart period had been chartered as such by the Crown, and sanctioned by the Chancellor; and it might ask with some show of reason that the industrial interest thus called into existence should be strengthened and safeguarded by a protective tariff.

shown in the case of London pinmakers

From the end of Elizabeth's reign to the beginning of the reign of William III, the pinmakers of London were engaged, as we have already seen, in a constant attempt to make their monopoly a reality by securing a prohibition on foreign pins. The controversy between the London industry and the Dutch importers, the arrangements and re-arrangements of the pinmakers with the haberdashers and with the wire-workers, of one monopolist with another monopolist, and finally of all these parties with the financier who leased from the King the privilege of reducing this economic chaos to a profit-making cosmos, forms perhaps the most instructive record that could be found of the continuous application of the 'mercantile system' to a particular branch of industry. Of all the medley of assertion and counter-assertion that form the staple of such a record, the one significant and incontrovertible fact appears to be the statement of the Dutch that the English pinmakers had borrowed this invention from them but had not yet learnt it thoroughly [3].

[1] Troeltsch, *Die Kalwer Zeughandlungscompagnie*, p. 31; cf. A. Thun, *Die Industrie am Niederrhein*, ii. pp. 109–10.

[2] The reader will find an excellent short account of *The Trust Movement in Great Britain* by H. W. Macrosty, in *British Industries*, edited by W. J. Ashley.

[3] *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii. 62.

There remains to be considered the influence of the attitude and the policy of foreign governments. As the mercantile, or, as some of its modern adherents prefer to call it, the industrial policy, was beginning to be adopted by most of the leading states, and as the excess of exports over imports, which was its main criterion of prosperity, could not be universally realized, there was naturally kindled between the nations a spirit of watchful jealousy and of mutual exacerbation. This growing sense of international rivalry had its useful side in arousing a spirit of inquiry. Commissions were appointed [1]; statistics were compiled [2]; the evidence of experienced merchants was taken [3]; the systems of regulation, of inspection, of subsidies, and of industrial organization prevalent in other countries were brought under consideration [4]. But the value of the inquiry was largely vitiated by its being too much directed to the discovery of the golden secret—how a country might impose its exports on other countries without suffering in turn from the infliction of imports.

Another factor, keener international rivalry

It was asserted that English exports to France had considerably declined of recent years, and now consisted only of the coarser fabrics, whilst the better qualities were largely supplied by the native manufacture [5]. That a change in this direction had actually taken place is probable enough. It might indeed have been anticipated as a result, not of the adoption of any particular commercial policy, but of the working of more natural causes—the restoration of peace and order to a distracted country, and the resuscitation of its productive forces. During the reign of Elizabeth, France had been torn asunder by a grievous civil war, which had continued to cast a fatal blight on agriculture and all other industries for a generation, and which only came to an end with the peace of 1598. During all this time, with the momentary exception of the Norfolk rising in 1571, England enjoyed internal peace, and was not even involved in external conflict till the end of the period.

English trade with France

The consequence was that the exports of England to France were abnormally stimulated. The Notables convoked by Henry IV at Rouen, in 1596, to discuss the national situation, complained bitterly of this dependence on foreign supply as one of the evil consequences of the

affected the recovery of France under Henry IV

[1] See below, p. 185.
[2] *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii. 29.
[3] Ibid., 45 and 50.
[4] J. May, *A declaration of the estate of clothing*, in *Tracts on Wool*, p. 6.
[5] *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii. 45.

war. 'It is well known,' they said, 'that before the present troubles, four times as much woollen cloth was made in France. Our neighbours send us every year from England more than a thousand vessels in part laden with manufactured goods such as woollen cloth, etc. . . The English send into this kingdom such a quantity of their manufactures of all kinds that they fill the country with them even down to their old hats, boots and shoes which they export by the ship-load to Picardy and Normandy in contempt of the French and of the authorities' (*au grand mépris des Français et de la police*)[1]. In the reign of Henry IV much was done to strengthen the economic condition of France. The truce between the religious factions, established by the Edict of Nantes, provided the necessary basis of social tranquillity; and the financial administration of Sully, in removing a great burden of debt, in rendering taxation lighter, more equable and more uniform, and in giving a new security to property[2], supplied the essential conditions under which commerce and industry might recover the ground they had lost. Having regard to the working of such causes as these, of the efficacy of which there can be no question, we shall not be inclined, without the production of substantial evidence, to attribute the partial recovery of France at this time to those more questionable devices of policy which had then begun to come into vogue—the regulation, protection and subsidization of industry by royal authority.

Mercantilist proposals of Barthélemy Laffemas

Prohibition of the importation of foreign manufactures and of the exportation of raw materials; entire reorganization of commerce and industry under the supervision of government functionaries; the regulation of wages, inspection of work, and settlement of industrial disputes through the instrumentality of this official machinery; and the establishment of public workshops for the employment of the poor; these were some of the far-reaching proposals laid by Barthélemy Laffemas, a would-be social reformer who had gained the ear of the King, before a Royal Commission especially appointed to consider them, in 1601. Although the Commission was largely abortive, and much of the scheme laid before it was never even attempted, the influence of its underlying ideas is to be seen in a great number of industrial experiments which occupied the rest of the reign[3].

[1] Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières*, ii. p. 153. [2] Ibid., p. 154.
[3] G. Fagniez, *L'économie sociale de la France sous Henri IV*, p. 96.

The most notable of these was the attempt of the King to establish the breeding of silk-worms throughout the length and breadth of France. Beginning with the planting of a few mulberry trees in the avenues of the Tuileries, he proceeded a few years later to make large plantations in three of his estates, to set up an establishment for breeding silk-worms, and even a factory for spinning silk. So far the undertaking had scarcely passed the bounds of harmless experiment. But in 1602, under the influence of Laffemas and others, and through the instrumentality of the Commission newly appointed to take charge of commerce and industry, the King gave the project a much wider and more questionable character. Contracts were made for the supply of large quantities of mulberry seeds and silk-worm's eggs, and these were to be distributed at low prices throughout the kingdom. Every parish was to have its breeding-house and nursery; experts were to instruct the peasants in the necessary arts; the clergy were to give the scheme their moral support; and in this way the production of raw silk was to become as universal as agriculture itself.

The scheme of Henry IV to promote the cultivation of silk,

It is hardly necessary to account for the failure of so ambitious an undertaking. The slackness and dishonesty of the agents, the ignorance and unwillingness of the peasants, the disapproval of the clergy, and, last but not least, the unsuitability of the climate, were all contributory causes, and the close of Henry's reign found the cultivation of raw silk scarcely, if at all, more extensively carried on than it had been at the beginning[1]. The general outcome of the King's other projects for the artificial fostering of the silk industry appears to have been equally unsatisfactory. A prohibition on the importation of silk manufactures, which he was induced to authorize in 1599, was speedily found to be premature, and was dropped within a year[2]; the prohibition of foreign in favour of native dyestuffs proved a serious hindrance to the manufacturer[3]; and very few of the privileged establishments, set up by the King in this or other industries, were to be found surviving in the following reign[4].

and his protectionist measures achieve no solid success

Henry of Navarre did not stand alone in his generation. The cultivation of silk, as providing a remedy against the infliction of a valuable import, was a favourite hobby of several contemporary rulers. In 1607 James I distributed 10,000 mulberry plants[5]; and Duke Frederick of Würtem-

The similar industrial policy of Würtemberg

[1] Fagniez, pp. 106–17, 129–33.
[2] Ibid., p. 105.
[3] Ibid., p. 127.
[4] Ibid., p. 137.
[5] *State Papers Dom., James I,* xxvi. 6.

berg, when dispatching an emissary to France in 1603, proudly gave him five pounds of dyed silk to carry with him as a token of his master's prowess [1]. Whilst the French proposals were still undergoing inquiry, Frederick had already set an ambitious industrial policy in operation, the main feature of which was, not the introduction of a new industry, but the exploitation of the existing manufacture of linen. The importation of linen and the exportation of flax were forbidden; and a most elaborate series of regulations was devised for the industry which even included the provision of a monthly dance and two annual festivals for the work-people. In spite of the presence of these benevolent features, the new taxation, which was an inevitable part of the scheme, gave rise to great discontent, and this was increased when it was found that the projector of this monopoly had contrived to make a 'corner' in the raw material, so that it rose to double the price. The country soon became too hot to hold the projector, who fled to Nuremberg; and on the death of Frederick, in 1608, the new taxation was abolished [2].

Development of export trade in English cloth

These cases will suffice to show that, to the existing influences of English political and industrial development which favoured the adoption of mercantilist and protective measures, there was added the stimulus imparted by the provocative example of rival nations. More direct provocation was given to England by Flanders. The Spanish Netherlands, as one of the earliest seats of the cloth industry, had had for several centuries the closest commercial relations with England: first as a market for her wool, and afterwards, when the weaving industry had been well established in England, as a market for half-manufactured cloth which was sent to be finished and dyed in the Flemish towns. With the spread of mercantilist ideas such a contribution to the employment of other nations was condemned in principle and even prohibited by statute; but as a necessary concession to the state of supply and demand, exemptions were granted, by Act of Parliament and by royal licence, which permitted a valuable trade in white cloth to be carried on [3].

Attempt to force finished cloth on the foreign market

By the commencement of the seventeenth century the skill of the English craftsmen had so far improved that a considerable trade in finished cloth was done with the Mediterranean and the East. There must likewise have

[1] *Württembergische Jahrbücher*, 1831, ii. p. 121.
[2] Ibid., 1842, p. 242.
[3] See above, pp. 89, 122.

been the beginnings of a trade with Flanders; for, in 1612, the Government of that country, alarmed at the prospect of encroachment on one of the chief Flemish industries, prohibited the import of all but white cloths from England. Out of this prohibition arose the project started by Alderman Cockayne, which presently gained the full support of the King and his advisers, requiring that every cloth exported from England should be dyed and finished before leaving the country [1].

The issues involved

It is the supposed success of this scheme that Frederick List assigns as one of the main causes of the subsequent prosperity of the English cloth trade [2]. Unfortunately for this theory the scheme was a complete and disastrous failure. But before examining the actual results it will conduce to a better appreciation of the significance of the mercantile policy, briefly to consider the issues involved, what were the political and economic ideals implied in the attempt, and what were the opposing political and economic ideals that triumphed in its failure.

II

The political situation in 1614

The year 1614 was not only the middle year of James's reign, but its turning-point. It was a year of crisis in the constitutional history both of England and of France. In France the States-General were abruptly dissolved before the complaints of the Third Estate had been answered, and they were not again summoned till the Revolution. In England the 'Addled Parliament,' which met in April, was dissolved in June with its grievances unredressed and the King's supplies ungranted. 'I am surprised,' said James to the Spanish Ambassador a few days after the dissolution, 'that my ancestors should ever have permitted such an institution to come into existence. I am a stranger, and found it here when I arrived, so that I am obliged to put up with what I cannot get rid of.' The Ambassador reminded him that he was able to summon and dismiss this formidable body at his pleasure. 'That is true,' said James, 'and what is more, without my assent the words and acts of the Parliament are altogether worthless [3].'

Views of the King's advisers

The cautious and conservative Salisbury, whose restraining influence had served to moderate the effects of James's quarrel with his previous Parliament, had lately been

[1] Gardiner, *History of England*, ii. p. 386; F. H. Durham, *Relation of Crown to Trade under James I*, in *Trans. R. Hist. Soc.* 1899.

[2] F. List, *A national system of political economy*, translated by S. Lloyd, p. 13.

[3] Gardiner, ii. p. 251.

removed by death. Those who now possessed the King's ear were for the most part men of little experience or capacity. There was one amongst them, it is true, who did not lack either qualification, but his ambitious and over-subtle mind, and his want of moral perception had led him to cast an entirely fallacious horoscope of the national destinies. In Bacon's views the wisdom of the King and of his chosen ministers was to be the supreme power in the constitution. The judges were to be the lions beneath the throne. Parliament was to serve as a convenient means of measuring and conciliating national feeling. But the King ought not to be dependent upon Parliament for his regular supplies, nor upon trial by jury for the punishment of those who resisted his authority[1].

Political significance of the cloth-finishing project

In the latter half of 1614, the abandonment of Parliamentary government presented an opportunity for realizing some of Bacon's ideals; and the result was to be seen in the revival of an unconstitutional form of taxation under the thin disguise of a voluntary contribution; and in the condemnation of a country gentleman by the Star Chamber, and the torture of an aged clergyman in the Tower for resistance to the imposition and for outspoken criticism of the Government[2]. It was in the midst of these ill-omened proceedings that the plan for the protection of the cloth-finishing industry was brought to maturity. A proclamation was issued, in the month following the dissolution of Parliament, forbidding the export of unfinished cloth; and as the Merchant Adventurers' Company declared their inability to carry on the export trade on such terms, a charter was granted, in February, 1615, transferring their privileges to the new company promoted by Alderman Cockayne, which undertook to export a gradually increasing quantity of the dyed and finished cloth. The King's advisers assured him that the work was feasible in a little time, and very profitable to the state[3].

Parallel cases in other industries

That this project was not an isolated phenomenon will have been made sufficiently clear by the facts presented in the two preceding chapters. In many other industries the spirit of monopoly was not, indeed, called into existence—it was everywhere latent already—but provided with a golden opportunity by the fiscal necessities of the Government. Protection had nominally been afforded to the leading English industries by statute for more than a century; but in order to render this really effectual, there

[1] Gardiner, ii. p. 192, iii. p. 2.
[2] Ibid., ii. pp. 270–5.
[3] F. H. Durham, *Relations of Crown to Trade under James I*, p. 216.

was required in each case an organization backed by ample capital, and strong enough to secure a monopoly of the home production whilst enforcing prohibition on the importer. To achieve this end, efforts had already been made by several industrial groups. In 1611–12 the feltmakers and the pewterers had attempted to obtain control of the whole production in their several trades [1], and though they were unsuccessful in this, the feltmakers procured, in 1613, and again in 1621, special proclamations against importation [2], whilst the Pewterers' Company, or a syndicate of its leading members, farmed the tin monopoly in the years 1615–20 [3]. At the very moment of the grant to the clothworkers, a capitalist, who was aiming at a monopoly in the pin trade, was offering the Government large sums for its support, which was ultimately secured. A few months later a prohibition was laid upon the importation of glass in the interest of another set of industrial monopolists [4]. But the closest parallel to the case of the clothworkers is to be found in the grant made in the following year, forbidding skins to be exported till they had been dressed by the London skinners, and here too a monopoly was formed to exploit the prohibition [5].

Royal 'impositions' justified as an instrument of retaliation

That a close connexion existed between the policy of industrial protection thus indicated, and the fiscal needs of the Government cannot admit of any doubt. The King's claim to levy impositions at his own discretion on the import and export trade of the country, which was, of course, the main subject of his disagreement with Parliament, had been for the most part argued on the ground of right. But as the controversy proceeded, the advocates of the King's cause began to see the wisdom of basing their case more upon grounds of expediency. The King, they argued, ought to be allowed the power of taxation in order that he might be free to negotiate for the protection of national commerce and industry. At the close of a long and learned remonstrance addressed to the King, in 1610, this argument is forcibly dealt with.

'The last assault made against this Right of the Kingdom was an objection grounded upon policy and matter of estate, as that it may so fall out that an imposition may be set by a foreign prince that may wring our people, in which case the counterpois is to set on the like here upon the Subjects of that Prince, which policy, if it be not speedily

[1] See above, pp. 155–62.
[2] *Proc. Coll.*, No. 26.
[3] See above, p. 155.
[4] *Proc. Coll.*, No. 42.
[5] See below, p. 203.

executed, but stayed untill Parliament, may in the meantime prove vain and idle, and much damage may be sustained that cannot afterwards be remedied. This strain of policy maketh nothing to the point of right. Our Rule is in this Commonwealth of ours "oportet neminem esse sapientiorem legibus." If there be an inconvenience it is fitter to have it removed by lawful means . . . And it is more tolerable to suffer a hurt to some few for a short time than to give way to the breach and violation of the right of the whole nation, for that is the true inconvenience [1].'

Bacon supports Cranfield's protectionist proposals

In 1610 the argument thus disposed of had been quite subsidiary to the main issue. But in the meantime the quick mind of Sir Lionel Cranfield had carried the idea of retaliatory duties to its logical conclusion, and was ready with a plan for solving the difficulty by giving taxation as a whole a more acceptable character. 'I do well allow,' says Bacon, addressing the King, in 1615, as to the desirability of calling a Parliament, 'the proposition of Sir Lionel Cranfield, being more indeed than I could have looked for from a man of his breeding' (Sir Lionel had been a mercer's apprentice), 'which is that the revenue by the late Impositions raised be turned without diminution and perhaps with increase, into raising of rates, not upon the same things, but where it shall be best for the advantage of the Kingdom and the disadvantage of the stranger; and that it may be so handled that it be not done directly as a laying down of the Impositions, but in respect of advancing the exportation above the importation.' In other words, it was proposed to replace a number of duties imposed for revenue purposes only by a protective tariff. This policy, Bacon argued, would have four great advantages. It would stop the grumbling at Scotch participation in the benefits of English trade by diverting men's minds to the evils of foreign imports; it would provide a revenue that could not be legally questioned; it would meet with less objection from the commercial classes; and last, but not least, it would 'indeed and *de vero* mend the trade of the country [2].'

Adoption of this policy by the King

In the end it was not deemed prudent to call a Parliament, but the suggestion of Sir Lionel Cranfield was adopted by the King and his advisers on their own responsibility. It was, however, considered advisable to recommend the new policy to the nation by representing it as the application of the ancient laws of the kingdom

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, 487, 13.
[2] Spedding, *Bacon*, v. p. 187.

to the exigencies of a pressing situation. It had been found, it was declared, 'that there is imported of latter tymes *communibus annis* by merchant strangers unto this realm, of foreign commodities to an exceeding great value more than is exported by them of the native commodities of this Kingdom, by means whereof the money and coyne of this realm is exported, which in short tyme will wholly exhaust the Treasure of this Kingdom.' In order to meet this grave crisis, the Privy Council, on December 19, 1615, thought fit to issue a number of plain and short articles, in which were summarily collected the remedies provided by existing statutes against the impending evil. The gist of these articles is embodied in the first of them, which declares, 'that all marchant strangers and denizens' (including as afterwards appears the merchants of Ireland, Jersey, or Guernsey) 'which bring any marchandise into this realm ought to employ the money which they shall receive for the same on the marchandise and commodities of this Realm.' To the due execution of the laws thus summarized, the King, it was said, was forced to have recourse out of inevitable necessity and for the preservation of the safety of his realm, yet at the same time it must be insisted upon that he was taking a course warranted by ancient and just laws still continuing in use; and similar laws, it was added, existed in Ireland and Jersey[1].

A commission appointed to reform the tariff

In the following month a royal commission was appointed, with Sir Lionel Cranfield as chairman, to frame a protective tariff, 'whereby an ease will follow to his Majestys subjects . . . yet without overmuch losse to his Majestys revenue.' 'Sir Lionel Cranfield,' says the royal letter, 'hath taken paines . . . and is able to give you much light. . . . It shall much facilitate the business if you proceed upon the lines he shall lay down. . . . For the rest I leave it to your good discretion[2].'

Constitutional significance of these events

With the endless difficulties arising out of the new policy, or with the way in which the Privy Council was kept busy during the following year in dealing with each case of import and of export 'on the merits,' in granting special permits to the harassed merchants for the exportation of pipestaves, or the importation of wine and sugar, we need not here concern ourselves further[3]. It is already sufficiently evident that the cloth-working project was only part of a wider policy of indirect taxation of a protectionist character, and that this policy was relied upon as a means

[1] *Privy Council Register*, Dec. 19, 1615, fol. 21.
[2] Ibid., Jan. 5, 1616, fol. 132.
[3] Ibid., Mar. 7, 1616.

of freeing the Crown from dependence upon the House of Commons for its regular supplies. If it had succeeded, it might ultimately have rendered the same service to the Stuarts as the industrial policy of Colbert rendered to the absolutism of Louis XIV.

III

Economic issues involved in the cloth-finishing project

The economic issue had a scarcely less important bearing on the future of the country than the constitutional one, though it is perhaps one less easy to realize. The contest here was between the vested interests, which were endeavouring to retain the advantage derived from a surviving element of local monopoly, and the larger and freer, but less concentrated and less organized, forces of commerce and industry, which were seeking to meet the problems of production and distribution along the lines of least resistance.

The claims of local monopoly

A clear illustration of this situation is furnished by a case which was being argued at this very time before the Privy Council, between the Shrewsbury drapers and the London merchants, as to the right to trade in Welsh cloth. In the Welsh uplands there had long existed a flourishing domestic industry similar to that carried on in the West Riding of Yorkshire. In earlier days, when the activities of commerce were not so far-reaching, the drapers of Shrewsbury, and other neighbouring towns, enjoyed a natural monopoly of the trade in the product of this industry. But in the course of the sixteenth century the London exporter found his way into Wales, and supplied a fresh outlet for the produce of the country weaver's loom. At the same time the local drapers began to embark a good deal of capital in the finishing processes. The drapers of Shrewsbury had declared in 1566 that they kept more than six hundred shearmen employed in dressing cloth before it was sent to the London market, besides building houses and finding work for the poor of the town[1]. They now argued that the Privy Council ought to support their efforts to set up a new industry and to provide the town population with employment, by preventing the London merchants from carrying the Welsh cloth out of the country unfinished.

opposed to the free expansion of national industry

The country weavers, on the other hand, took their stand on the principle of free trade. They were many times more numerous than the shearmen of the town, and

[1] 8 Elizabeth, c. 7.

they declared, what indeed was undeniably true, that if they were restricted to the supply of the local market, they would have less employment and a lower price for their wares[1]. This situation, with the economic issues involved, was by no means peculiar to this locality. It had, in fact, arisen in every part of England where the cloth industry was extensively carried on. The exclusive rights, which Shrewsbury, Oswestry, and Whitchurch attempted to establish over the Welsh district, had been claimed by Norwich for the Eastern Counties, by the five chief towns of Worcestershire for that county, and by Bridgewater, Taunton and Chard for the county of Somerset[2].

Parallel of the German 'territorial economy'

All these instances show a distinct development in the direction of the 'territorial economy,' which was exemplified at this period by some of the smaller German States, and which served as a halting-place half-way between the 'town economy' and the 'national economy.' In 1617, at the very time when the Shrewsbury drapers were being authorized to shut out the London merchants from the Welsh district, the Nuremberg merchants, who had been carrying on a prosperous trade with the weavers of the Saxon Voigtland, were excluded at the instance of the Saxon traders of Plauen; and in this case there was no national legislature with sufficient authority to overrule the exclusion, and to give free play to the development of industry and the employment of capital[3].

In France, mercantilism fostered internal restrictions

That the maintenance of such restrictions was not rendered impossible by the existence of a strong national government is shown by the case of France, which retained many of its internal customs' barriers down to the Revolution. It is true that Colbert sought to remove those barriers, and it is generally supposed that their continuance was due to the triumph of local prejudice and self-interest over the wiser purposes of a great statesman. But when it is borne in mind that the industrial policy of Colbert was in its aims essentially the same as that of the Stuarts, and differed only in the ability and consistency with which it was pursued, it will not seem improbable that the obstacles to national unity which he was seeking to remove with the one hand, he was unconsciously strengthening with the other. There can be little doubt, for example, that the planting of privileged manufactures in the towns

[1] *Privy Council Register*, May 2, 11, 16; Aug. 31, Sept. 17, 1613; May 23, 1619.

[2] See above, pp. 91–3.

[3] Louis Bein, *Die Industrie des sächsischen Voigtlandes*, p. 38.

by Henry IV and Colbert, with a view to fostering the growth of national industry, was largely responsible for the fact that it was not till the days of Turgot that an attempt was made in France to allow that free development of country industry, which had already for more than a century been the mainspring of the productive power of England[1].

Similar effect of English policy at this time

But the fact that the local privileges of the Shrewsbury drapers were maintained by the Privy Council under the personal government of James I, and removed by Act of Parliament in 1624, is not the only evidence that the intervention of a strong central government may retard instead of promoting the economic unity of a nation. As an essential part of its policy of industrial protection, the Government was urged to enforce a statute, which to the great advantage of the nation had come to be generally disregarded, forbidding growers of wool to sell to any who were not manufacturers.

The arguments of the middlemen in defence of their calling were incontrovertible:—

The middlemen as agents of national unity

'There is in England 39 English shires, and of these but 12 that use any quantity of clothing, and of these 12 but 5 that have any store of woolle of their own breeding . . . The places of the growing and the places of the converting are as farre distant as the scope of this kingdom will give leave. The woolles growing in the countyes of Worcester, Salopp and Stafford are spent partly in Worcester, and a great part of them in the countyes of Gloucester, Devon and Kent, and much of them in Southampton. The woolle of the countyes of Lincoln, Northampton, Rutland, Leicester, Warwick, Oxon and Bucks are thus dispersed. One sorte of it is carried into the North parts to Leeds, Wakefield, Hallifax, Ratsdale, etc. Another sorte of it is carried parte of it into the East parts to Norwich and soe wrought by the poore people inhabiting aboute that coast as farr as Yarmouth, and parte of it into the west parts to Exeter, and from thence it is sould to the poore people of the Country thereabouts as farr as Plymouth. Some of these woolls are carried to the farthest parts of Essex and Suffolk as to Coxall, Brayntree and Malden.

'Some woolles growing in Norfolk are brought threescore miles or more to London, and from thence carried eight score miles and more into North Wales and there draped into cloathe and soe sent back again and soulde in London.

[1] Levasseur, *Hist. des classes ouvrières*, 1ère sér., 2nd edit., ii. p. 752.

'Thus by the endeavour of the wooll merchant . . . the woolles of the severall countries are bought and, being sorted, are from thence carried six or seven score miles before they be used, because in those places those sorts of woolle wilbe improved to the greatest advantage for the King and comonwealth[1].'

The Government prohibits the middleman from trading in wool

The Privy Council manifested some hesitation about interfering with this beneficent freedom of intercourse, but the pressure of the manufacturing interests, to the support of which the Government was committed, was too strong to be resisted, and a provisional order was made, prohibiting the activity of the middlemen between the May sheep-shearing and Michaelmas. At the same time, as the fact could not be ignored that the majority of the small masters engaged in the important manufacture of the new draperies could not afford to travel in search of their material, letters were sent to the Justices of the Peace of the districts concerned, instructing them to inform the Privy Council how much wool would be required, and the Privy Council was prepared to grant special licences tolerating the middlemen and carriers to that extent[2]. Within a month or two of this order, country gentlemen were being dealt with in the Star Chamber on the charge of buying and selling wool. Nor was the attack upon the middlemen confined to the wool trade[3]. Informers were also busy prosecuting similar charges against the traders who helped to supply the ever-growing population of the metropolis with butter and cheese[4].

Parliament undoes the work of Royal mercantilism

It would be impossible to find a more instructive refutation of the prevalent fallacy that national unity has been mainly achieved by the strong hand of autocracy, than is provided by a comparison of the mercantilist industrial policy of the English and French monarchies with the part played by Parliament in the same sphere of activity. The great advances towards economic unity made by England at this time were not the result of brilliant statecraft. They were the fruit of the victories of English common sense, achieved almost in silence, and only preserved from oblivion by a cursory mention in an obscure corner of a repealing statute. At the very time, for instance, when Henry IV was setting up privileged industries in every part

[1] *State Papers Dom., James I*, lxxx. 13.
[2] *Privy Council Register*, June 23, 1616, pp. 321–2; see also Apr. 26, May 12, June 2: cf. Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., ii. pp. 298, 504.
[3] *Privy Council Register*, Sept. 1, 1616, p. 389.
[4] Ibid., May 9, 1616.

of France, the English Parliament was declaring it 'to be lawful for every Clothier of what towne or countie soever . . . to make . . . any true woollen cloth . . . albeit the same kind of woollen cloth doe beare specially the name of some other county, city or towne within this realm [1].' And the same Parliament, which in 1623 expressed its condemnation of the industrial policy of James I by passing the Statute of Monopolies and abolishing the restrictions imposed on trade in Welsh cloth, performed an even greater service in the cause of national unity by repealing a great number of Acts, passed under the Tudors or earlier, with a view to regulating trade, fixing prices and rents, and inflicting restraints and disabilities on Welshmen. Some of these enactments were no doubt already obsolete, but in two cases at least the repeal was of vital importance to the future development of the cloth manufacture in England. One of these was a provision in a statute of Philip and Mary forbidding weavers to set up outside the towns; and the other was that Act of Edward VI which had so lately been made an instrument of reaction, forbidding middlemen to deal in wool or yarn [2].

IV

Actual results of Cockayne's scheme,

We have now seen with what evil auguries for the political and economic future of England the greatest of the experiments of James I in industrial policy had been initiated. We have likewise seen that the foreign examples, which probably suggested, or at any rate seemed to justify it, carried within them the seeds, if indeed they had not already borne the fruit of failure. It is now time to consider the actual effects of the English mercantilist experiment in its twofold aspect, as a policy of retaliation, and as a scheme for securing the prosperity of national industry.

it leads to a disastrous tariff war with foreign countries,

As a policy of retaliation it was marked by a fatal arrogance. It retorted upon the partial exclusion from a single foreign market, not by corresponding measures of exclusion, but by an attempt to force open all foreign markets, not merely to English goods, but to English manufactured goods of a particular kind. In view of the universal prevalence of mercantilist ideas, it is no wonder that such a procedure was strongly resented. The Dutch, who had supplied the English with one of their best

[1] 4 James I, c. 2, sect. 12.

[2] 21 James I, c. 28.

markets, closed their ports to English cloth, whether finished or unfinished. The English Government thereupon prohibited the export of wool to Holland, not only from England, but also from Scotland and Ireland, where the wool export was more important. Yet the wool, it was asserted, continued to pass over to Holland under the disguise of beer. Then it was proposed to exclude the import of Dutch provisions, and to make shift with supplies from Ireland; to prevent the Dutch fishermen from fishing in the open seas, and to compel every Dutch vessel that put into any of our ports to take away the finished and dyed cloth as a quarter of its cargo[1]. Other countries followed the Dutch example, and so there was stirred up a 'tariff war,' which continued to rage with evil effects for all concerned, and for England in particular, long after the unfortunate scheme which originated the trouble had been abandoned[2].

and proves a complete failure at home

When we turn to investigate the effects of the scheme upon the condition of national industry, our task is a simple one. The almost immediate result was a disastrous failure. The new Merchant Adventurers' Company proved from the first incapable of fulfilling its engagement to find a market for the finished cloth, and before the year was out they were seeking permission to fall back upon the export of 'whites.' Bacon wrote to the King, in February 1616, to suggest that 'he ought not to rest and build this great wheel of your kingdom upon these broken and brittle pins, or try experiments further upon the health and body of your State.' It was not that he had now come to disapprove of the policy involved in the plan; but that he thought the new company incapable of carrying it out, and considered that it might be more profitable to throw them over and make a fresh contract with the original merchant adventurers[3].

The country cloth industry at a standstill

In the meantime the export trade in white cloth had come almost to a standstill, and from the country districts where there was a large population of weavers dependent on this trade for employment, there were heard loud and bitter complaints. In September of 1616, Bacon writes again to the King. 'I perceive the cloth goeth not off as it should and that Wiltshire is now come in with complaint as well as Gloucestershire and Worcestershire; so that this

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, 152, fol. 278.
[2] F. H. Durham, *Relations of the Crown to Trade under James I*, p. 218.
[3] Spedding, *Bacon*, v. p. 257.

gangrene creepeth on.' Bacon's suggestion now is that a proclamation should be issued forbidding for six months the wearing of any stuff made wholly of silk without mixture of wool. He thinks that by this bold stroke of statecraft 'Your Majesty shall blow a horn to let the Flemings know your Majesty will not give over the chase[1].'

Doubts of the King's advisers

But there were doubters at the Council-table who were inquiring 'how after Easter this work is like to last, and whether this company of dyeing and dressing will not enforce other countries to make cloth and so take work from 100,000 workers, whilst they now set on work only 10,000 dyers and dressers[2].' And as a matter of fact the Dutch had already begun to give a bounty to any one who set up a loom. The task of describing at further length the unhappy conditions to which things had been brought by the pursuit of the new industrial policy, and the desperate expedients which the Government were driven to consider by way of remedy, is rendered unnecessary by the survival of some notes in the handwriting of Sir Julius Caesar, which were prepared for the consideration of the King in Council in September, 1616. The extracts which follow are full of unconscious irony, and require no comment.

Remedies suggested

'Means to avoid the present stand of cloth.

'(1) Commissioners honest and substantial and sufficient for skill to be presently appointed for the viewe of the cloth brought weekely to Blackwell Hall, and the faulty cloth to be returned uppon the clothier with imprisonment till he put in security to answer it in the lawe; and the good to be justly valued according to the usual prices for these two years past and the new Merchant Adventurers enforced to buy the same.

'(2) So many of the new Merchant Adventurers as shall refuse to lay out for cloth such sommes as they have subscribed for to bee presently committed to abide the censure of the Star Chamber for abusing of his Majesty and the State in so desperate and dangerous a case as this is.

'(3) The fines of them to be employed in the buyeing of cloth for the riddance of the market.

'(4) So many in London as are thought worth £10,000 to be moved by my Lord Mayor to buy up clothes for £1,000 at the least; especially all woollen drapers of half that worth, viz. £5,000.

'(5) Expresse commandement and present example of King's Counsellors and Courtiers and all their servants to

[1] Spedding, vi. p. 74. [2] *Lansdowne MSS.*, 152, fol. 271.

wear nothing but broad cloth in their gownes, clokes, girthes, robes or breeches till Easter next, to the end that woollendrapers may be encouraged to buy the cloth made or to be made before that day; or else on paine of imprisonment not to come into Court. . . .'

'(10) And if it bee doubtful whether these proceedings agree with law, the answere is that they doe, for the law giveth place to parlous cases of State and leaveth them to be provided for by the wisdom of the King and his Counsellors and "*Salus reipublicae suprema lex est*," which is a sufficient answer to all cavillers and peevish lawyers[1].'

Abandonment of the project

In January, 1617, the new company surrendered their charter, and the old company was reinstated. Later in the year the King in a public proclamation made a complete recantation of the whole design; but it may be added that this repentance, however salutary, did not save the nation from the penalty already incurred by the rashness of its rulers. The cloth industry did not wholly recover from the ill effects of the disturbance till the end of the reign. Nevertheless some words of royal wisdom are well worthy of quotation.

A royal recantation

'We declared our desires,' he said, 'to have brought to passe as a principal work of our times the manufactures of dying and dressing of broad cloth within this realm . . . but finding that time discovereth many inhabilities which cannot at first be seen . . . we intend not to insist and stay longer upon specious and faire showes which produce not the frut our actions do aim at . . . perceiving that the former groundes proposed to us by the Undertakers of that Worke consisted more in hopes then in effects, and finding the work itself to bee too great to bee brought to pass in a very short time[2].'

The influence of political conditions on economic development

It has been the aim of a certain school of economic writers, of whom Frederick List is perhaps the best known, to emphasize the dependence of a prosperous economic development upon a consciously adopted and strongly directed national policy. The historical facts as to the manner in which commercial supremacy has passed in the course of centuries from city to league, and from league to nation, from the Italian to the German, and from the Dutchman to the Englishman, have been eloquently advanced in support of this doctrine[3]. What they un-

[1] *Lansdowne MSS.*, clii. 56, fol. 271.
[2] *State Papers Dom.*, Proclamations by King James I, Aug. 12, 1617.
[3] F. List, *A National System of Political Economy*, translated by S. Lloyd.

doubtedly tend to show is that political circumstances have had a great share in determining the relative economic strength and prosperity of rival states. But that is after all a truth which, though it may have been unduly overlooked in abstract argument, has seldom been positively questioned.

Is recognized by economists

That the growth within a nation of a sound political organization, based on the mutual respect of classes and the increasing recognition of individual freedom, leading by a natural process to the achievement of organic national unity, under the influence of which the restrictions on internal intercourse fall gradually away, whilst the burden of unnecessary or arbitrary taxation is thrown off the shoulders of the producers of wealth—that such a development is a factor of vital importance in the attainment of economic efficiency and prosperity, and that the moral and intellectual energy generated in the process contributes in a high degree towards the same end, probably no economist would venture to deny. It would also be generally admitted that the more conscious policy by which wise kings or statesmen have cleared the channels for the healthy flow of natural forces, which they might misdirect but could not create or annul, is to be reckoned among the favouring circumstances to which a nation owes its material power and wealth.

But cannot easily be made conscious or direct

But of national policy in this restricted sense, little or nothing has ever been consciously adopted as a mere means to economic ends. Freedom, internal unity, pure and responsible administration have been sought as ends in themselves, and are never likely to be sought or gained from any other motive. Although therefore in looking back upon history we shall have to attribute very much of the trend of economic development to the working of underlying political causes, we must not expect to see much direct and conscious connexion between such causes and their effects. The political conditions which are most effectual are not at the beck and call of any statesman, however finely inspired or however completely clothed with the mandate of an aspiring people. They are slowly built up for the most part in silence and obscurity by the manifold operation of national temperament and national character, and only to long historical retrospect do they emerge in the bold outline of a constitutional system.

The secret of England's industrial supremacy

It has been said with truth that the foundations of England's industrial ascendancy were laid in the centuries that preceded her adoption of the principle of international free trade; and it has been argued that England owed the

start she had already gained in competition with other nations to the successful adoption of a mercantilist policy of bold economic aggression. Something has been done in this chapter to dispose of some of the facts upon which this argument is based; and it will be sufficient in conclusion to suggest another possible theory of English national progress, namely, that by the freedom of her internal intercourse and by the comparative absence of mercantile restrictions, England had been, during at least two centuries, not only building up those productive powers which were the admiration and the envy of continental theorists, but also making the one essential preparation for her subsequent adoption of the principle of a larger freedom of trade.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE TRADE UNION

I

Industrial organizations pass into the hands of large masters,

THE struggle within and between the various trading and industrial organizations, which has been the subject of the preceding chapters, has presented itself in two main aspects. It was a conflict between the small capitalist and the large capitalist; and it was also a conflict between industrial capital and commercial capital. At the outset the interests opposed to each other were in both these two cases the same. The industrial capital was mostly in the hands of the small capitalist, whilst the large capitalist was generally a mere trader. But as the development proceeded this identification ceased to be valid. Industrial capital was so far victorious as to win for itself an equal place as an organized interest alongside commercial capital. The cause of the small master, on the other hand, so far as his share in organization was concerned, suffered in most cases irreparable defeat, for the simple reason that the greater part of industrial capital was passing out of his hands to assume larger forms in the hands of a new class of manufacturers, who might still be traders to some extent, but whose principal function it was to be employers and organizers of labour.

as shown by feltmakers' development

The way in which the organizations set up to defend the small master against one kind of capitalist became the instrument of his subjection to another kind, is well illustrated by the case of the Feltmakers' Company. We have seen how that company had its origin in the movement amongst the poorer feltmakers to rid themselves of their dependence on the capital of the haberdashers for a supply of their material, and how an attempt was made to use their newly acquired charter as a means of attaining that object. The disaster in which that experiment ended did not prevent the corporation from persevering in the more orthodox aim of obtaining its recognition by the city as one of the livery companies, and so acquiring authority to control the trade in London. So early as 1612 a committee of the Common Council reported in favour of

admitting the new company, but on this and on several subsequent occasions, when the feltmakers' claims were supported by a special mandate from the King, the influence of the haberdashers, who still retained a large interest in the manufacture, was strong enough to procure their defeat. Little by little, however, in spite of many misfortunes, the real control of the trade passed into the hands of the feltmakers, and at length, in 1650, they attained by virtue of their own improved position that recognition which the royal authority had been powerless to secure for them [1].

Position of feltmakers in 1580 and in 1650

To realize the nature of the change which had slowly been effected we must contrast the condition of the feltmakers in 1650 with what it had been in 1580. At the earlier date the haberdashers could claim that many of the more prosperous feltmakers were on their side, and the small masters admitted this. 'It may be that some of the rytchest feltmakers . . . do somewhat hold themselves contented . . . because that they with ready money and parte credit do buy much, and have the choice and best.' They themselves, on the other hand, were at the mercy of the merchants, who sold them the refuse of their wool, and since they complained had refused to supply them at all [2]. In 1650 it is the poorer feltmakers dependent upon them for relief whose support is claimed by the haberdashers, since 'the Company of Feltmakers looke not at all at the preservation of their poore members, but at the upholding of their better sort.' In reply to this the feltmakers offer to take over the charge of the poorer members, and while they make the strict regulation of apprenticeship a strong part of their case, they add that 'many of the trade employ ten, twenty or thirty persons and upwards in picking and carding of wool and preparing it for use, besides journeymen and apprentices' [3].

Journeyman replaces small master

Thus at the commencement of the struggle the feltmakers were the 'workmen' of the haberdashers, and the small master was scarcely, if at all, divided by class interests from the journeyman and the apprentice. Incorporation was sought for as a means of freeing the master from his dependence on the capital of the merchant, and of securing at the same time the status of the journeyman. In the face of a common enemy this solidarity was maintained till both objects were achieved. But in proportion as the masters became capitalists, the journeymen of necessity became a distinct class

[1] *City Repertories*, xxx. 245 and lx. 193; *State Papers Dom., James I*, 1619–23, p. 442.

[2] *Lansdowne MSS.*, xxviii. 28.

[3] *Repertories*, lx. 193.

with separate interests, inheriting, however, from the struggles of the past the advantages of a protected status and the habit of combined action. From 1650 onwards the haberdashers disappear from the scene, and in the last quarter of the seventeenth century the conflict of the previous century between the small master and the merchant repeats itself in the relation of the journeyman to the master. And precisely in the same manner as the earlier situation and the later are related to each other as two stages of an industrial evolution, so the seventeenth-century company, which was the issue of the one, is related to the eighteenth-century trade union, which was the issue of the other.

Same development in yeomanry of older companies

Thus the disintegration of the small master type gave rise to the formation of the two classes most characteristic of modern industry, that of capitalist manufacturers on the one hand, and that of workmen without capital on the other. And it is not only the inner development of the new corporations of the seventeenth century that illustrate this process. The history of the bodies of yeomanry, which during the sixteenth century had come, as we have seen, to represent the class of small masters within the older companies, supplies evidence of the same character in greater detail. It shows how the small master was enabled, by a temporary identification of his class with the advancing cause of industrial capital, to defend his own status and even to secure a degree of privilege against outside workers; and how subsequently in the concentration of the larger manufactures which naturally resulted from the growth of industrial capital, he was gradually replaced by the beginnings of the factory system.

The Clothworkers' Company protects the status of its small masters,

A clear case of this kind is that of the Clothworkers' Company. It has been shown in a previous chapter that the main line of cleavage within this company at the beginning of the seventeenth century was drawn, not between employers and employed, but between the mercantile interest and the industrial interest. The governing body was mainly composed of merchants engaged in the export of cloth from every part of the country, who had no special interest in conniving at the infringement of the regulations which protected the status of the London craftsmen. The larger employers, who would have been glad to get rid of those restrictions, required the support of the small masters in their attempts to prevent the export of unfinished cloth. The members of the industrial section united therefore in the twofold demand, that the company should assist in

checking the unlawful exportation, and that it should take measures against the multiplication of apprentices and the formation of industrial partnerships. But whilst the authorities of the company had every motive for evading the first demand, it was possible to arrive at something like unanimity in regard to the second. The records of the Clothworkers' Court during the first half of the seventeenth century reveal an increasing tendency on the part of the larger employers to ignore the restrictions on apprenticeship; but at the same time they serve to show that the authority of the company was constantly used for the suppression of this tendency. The company lent its support to the small masters, in their endeavours to bring all the artisans of their craft attached to other companies under its supervision and control. It acquiesced in, if it did not promote, an Act of Common Council obtained in 1618, the sole purpose of which was to protect the status of the small master, and a bill framed upon the same lines was presented to Parliament, though it was not carried through, in the year 1624[1].

but they are gradually replaced by journeymen

In the course of the seventeenth century the conditions in the cloth-working industry underwent a development similar to the one already noticed in the case of the feltmakers. When the grievances of the industrial section were once more formulated by the yeomanry at the time of the Civil War, the specific aims of the small master seem to have dropped almost out of sight, and from the Restoration onwards there are increasing signs of the displacement of this class by a body of larger employers on the one hand, and by a mass of journeymen on the other. By the middle of the reign of Charles II, the interests of the industrial rank and file are represented by a combination, not of small masters, but of journeymen, who complain of the employment of country workmen[2]. In 1682 we hear of journeymen taking the favourable opportunity of a shipping order to refuse to work under twelve shillings a week[3]. And simultaneously with the appearance of the modern type of workman we see the rise of the modern type of industrial capitalist. In 1689 a number of small masters complained to the Clothworkers' Court of 'some merchants that keep journeymen clothworkers, packers, pressers, dyers and others to work in their houses, and not only imploy them in doing their own work but also other merchants' clothes,

[1] *Hist. MSS. Comm. Third Rep.*, App., p. 30.
[2] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Dec. 10, 1675.
[3] Ibid., Aug. 16, 1682.

which in the end will prove the ruine of many families in the working trade[1].'

This development not a reversion to older conditions

At first sight it might seem as if what had taken place in the two cases thus briefly outlined, was a mere reversion of the small masters into the journeyman class from which they had emerged in the fifteenth century. But to take this view is to overlook the essential element of progress, which gives the whole development its true significance. The position both of employer and of workman at the end of the seventeenth century was widely different from what it had been at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The small masters' organization had served as the training ground for a new species of capitalist, the modern 'captain of industry.' Its influence upon the rank and file of industry had been still more educational. Even if the whole class of small masters had been reduced by the introduction of larger industrial capital to the level of journeymen, the result, from the point of view of social progress, could not be regarded as an entire loss. The advantage gained is to be measured by comparing the unsteady, isolated and impermanent character of journeymen's combinations in the fifteenth century with the increasingly coherent, continuous and influential activity of trade unions since the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The trade union was built up out of the ruins of the small master

In tracing backwards the spiritual ancestry of the organized skilled workman of the present day, the first link is undoubtedly to be found in the small master of the seventeenth century. It is in his efforts after organization, partly in their success, but quite as much in their failure, that the immediate antecedents of the modern trade union are to be sought. We have so far been following the history of these efforts along two main lines, the attempt to preserve an active share in the control of the older companies by means of the yeomanry organization or otherwise, and the attempt to secure economic independence through separate incorporation. The movement reached high-water mark in the second of these aspects under the personal government of Charles I, and in the first of them, under the Commonwealth. After that it began perceptibly to ebb. The small master was gradually ousted from his share in the older companies, and the political circumstances were no longer favourable to the formation of new ones. The secret of this retrogressive movement was that transformation of the small master into the journeyman which has already been described. And just as we found the

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Aug. 14, 1689.

small master in the sixteenth century struggling to adapt and appropriate the traditions of the superseded handicraft organization, so we shall find the journeyman at the close of the seventeenth century endeavouring to build up a new status out of the ruins of the small master. With the clear emergence of this new class, conscious of its special interests and combining effectually for their promotion, our story ends. From that point onwards the reader will be able to place himself in abler hands[1]. But in order to realize the conditions which shaped the later movement we must trace the decay of the constitutional position of the small master.

II

Traders and craftsmen in older companies

The significance of the development by which the Court of Assistants came to be the governing body of the livery company, has been set forth in detail in an earlier chapter. This concentration of all executive and electoral power in a few hands, represented, in so far as it was due to economic causes, the dominance within the companies of the interests of the trader or merchant employer over the purely industrial interests. The policy of industrial protection adopted by the Stuarts afforded a strong rallying point for resistance to the power thus exercised by the traders. The history of each of the new corporations, such as the feltmakers, the glovers, and the pinmakers, began, as we have seen, in the revolt of an industrial section against the governing body of one of the older companies, who were accused of usurping power without exercising proper control, and of being, as the craftsmen said, like changelings in their cradle. But there were a number of other cases in which the movement assumed marked proportions without leading to a definite and permanent separation.

The Government support the industrial interest

The case of the clothworkers supplies a good illustration of the influence of the Government's industrial policy on the constitutional relations of the classes within a company. When the Privy Council was on the point of completely adopting Alderman Cockayne's project for dyeing and dressing all English cloth, the Clothworkers' Court received a letter from the Lord High Treasurer 'touching some better government to bee . . . established over the artisan clothworkers of this companie without the which his Lordship thought it wolde bee harde to effecte that great and honourable work intended to be established. Uppon the

[1] S. and B. Webb, *History of Trade Unionism.*

readinge of which letters procured (as it is thought) by the meane of the artisan clothworkers of this companie of whom a good number being this daie here assembled, it was demanded what it is that they required . . . whereunto they made answer that first they required that suite and meanes might be made for the reducing of all artisan clothworkers, as well free of the company of Merchant Taylors as of anie other company within this citie whatsoever, under the rule . . . of this company. And next it was required by some of the saide Artisan Clothworkers here then present that the . . . government of the manuell artisan clothworkers might be wholly referred to the Wardens and Assistants of the Yeomanry, but in this point they did dissente, for some and the most parte of them were of a contrarie mynde[1].'

Large and small masters not united

The reason for this division of opinion amongst the members of the industrial section is doubtless to be found in the fact that the small masters, whilst strongly in favour of the protectionist proposals to which the Company refused to lend its support, were at the same time unwilling to transfer the government of their trade from the hands of the merchants who composed the Court of the Company, to those of the larger employers, who were promoting the protectionist movement but who would be much less likely than the merchants to maintain the apprenticeship regulations which safeguarded the status of the small master. The result of this balancing of motives was that the unity of the company, although it underwent a severe strain, was preserved throughout the crisis.

The attempt to remodel the constitution of the Skinners' Company,

The Skinners' Company, in circumstances almost exactly the same, was scarcely so fortunate and appears to have suffered a temporary disruption. The governing body of the skinners, like that of the clothworkers, had come to be composed of merchants engaged in foreign commerce, who were more concerned in developing the export trade in skins produced by the country as a whole than in fostering the London industry of dressing skins. The industrial section complained that they were excluded from the export trade and at the same time deprived by it of their raw material[2]. As in the case of so many other trades, an agitation begun in Elizabeth's reign met with conditions favourable to success under James I. The artisan skinners, like the feltmakers, managed to get an Act passed by James's first Parliament for the protection of their interests against

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Dec. 17, 1614.

[2] *Hist. MSS. Rep.*, Salisbury MSS., iv. pp. 91–4; *Lansdowne MSS.* lxxi. 54.

the merchants[1]. They also obtained a grant from the King, but this, instead of separating them from the Skinners' Company by a fresh incorporation, proceeded to remodel the constitution of that company so as to secure for them equal rights within it. Every other year the master of the company and two of the four wardens were to be chosen from the industrial section, and in the alternate years when the master was a merchant, three of the wardens were to be practical skinners. In the same way the two interests were to have equal representation upon the Court of Assistants[2]. As the Skinners' Company refused to carry out this arrangement, the London industrialists continued their agitation, and, under the influence of the protectionist movement then at its height, demanded a prohibition on the export of certain classes of skins until they were dressed. Capitalists were ready to finance the monopoly if it were secured. The King was willing to grant the necessary patent, but the Privy Council after hearing the merchants stayed it as inexpedient[3]. The two sections of the Company continued their dispute under Charles I[4]; and as late as 1749 the artisan skinners were endeavouring to maintain the validity of the revised constitution before a court of law[5].

In both the above cases the rising power of the capitalist manufacturer is to be observed as the moving force, which gives an almost involuntary direction to the action of the rank and file of small masters. Alike in attempts to remodel the old corporations and in the formation of new ones, it is his interest rather than theirs that tends to find predominating expression. And especially where the element of monopoly was potent, the intervention of the royal power in favour of industry was a very doubtful advantage to the small masters or to the journeymen employed by them. The truth of this, as far as the setting up of new corporations is concerned, has been already illustrated in the cases of the pinmakers, the playing-card makers and the beaver-makers[6]. Another instance, in addition to the two just cited, of the application of the same truth to the remodelling of an old corporation, is furnished by the case of the

and of the Weavers was motived—not by the interest of the small master—

[1] 3 James I, c. 9.

[2] Hazlitt, *Livery Companies*, p. 254; *Livery Companies Comm. Rep.*, i. 388; *Remembrancia*, ii. 282.

[3] *Privy Council Register*, Nov. 13, 1616; Jan., Feb. 26, 1617; also *State Papers Dom., James I*, lxxxvi. 77, xcvii. 102.

[4] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, cccxxix. 30.

[5] *Livery Companies Comm. Rep.*, i. 388.

[6] See also the complaint of the Clockmakers in Atkins and Overall's account of that Company, p. 60.

Weavers' Company. In 1638 Charles I sanctioned a most ambitious proposal for the enlargement of the powers of that company. The London weavers were to be amalgamated with those of Canterbury, and to be empowered to appoint delegates in any town or city in the kingdom. All the silk weavers of London were to be brought under the company's control, and all the goods made there were to be viewed and sealed at its hall. In return for this grant of monopoly, the company bound itself to levy eightpence on every pound of silk wrought by an English weaver, and a shilling a pound from alien weavers[1]. A year later the Government received a petition from a great number of journeymen weavers who had been long out of work, and some of them abated out of their wages. They considered their distress to be due to the payment which masters of the Company of Weavers had to render to His Majesty, for certain privileges which they were able to perform 'by keeping four or five apprentices, and so sitting at little charge through keeping few or no journeymen, whereas those who employed the petitioners must either abate the price of their labour as they had already begun to do or else would be unable to sell at the same prices as others[2].'

but by those of the industrial monopolist

All these facts, and many others adduced in previous chapters, tend to show that the industrial protection movement of the Stuart period, though it professed to champion the cause of the small master whose class constituted the industrial democracy of that time, and though it often enlisted his support and was carried to a successful issue with his assistance, was not animated mainly by a regard to his interests, and did not as a matter of fact tend to subserve them. But the victories thus won with his help and in his name, whilst they served in many cases to undermine his economic status, quickened his sense of his rights and kept his capacity for organization alert and vigorous. At the time when the Civil War broke out, the cause of the organized small master as such was to a great extent already a lost cause, and he was within measurable distance of being driven to take his stand with the journeyman class, and to furnish, by virtue of his traditions and of his capacity for social action, the nucleus of a new form of organization.

Constitutional

It is this prophetic significance which lends a peculiar

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, 1638, p. 454; see also cccxciii. 48, 56, 57; cccevii. 79; ccccix. 202–3; ccccxx. 69; ccccxxi. 1; ccccxxix. 2; ccccxxxi. 22.

[2] Ibid., ccccxxvii. 89; for a retrospective view of the Weavers' history see *Harleian MSS.* 2262.

interest to the last heroic stand made by the small master, under the inspiration of that ardent outburst of democratic feeling which signalized the opening of the Commonwealth period. Now for the first time his position in the industrial organization, of which he was nominally a member, might be discussed, not as a matter of vested interest, but as a question of high abstract principle.

struggle of the small master under the Commonwealth

'All Legal Jurisdiction,' say the commonalty of the weavers in presenting their case to the House of Commons, 'over a number of people or society of men must either be primitive or derivative. Now primitive jurisdiction is undoubtedly in the whole body and not in one or more members, all men being by nature equall to other and all Jurisdictive power over them, being founded by a compact and agreement with them, is invested in one or more persons who represent the whole and by the content of the whole are impowered to govern by such rules of equality towards all as that both governors and governed may know certainly what the one may command and the other must obey, without the performance of which mutual contract all obligations are cancelled and that jurisdictive power returns unto its first spring—the people from whom it was conveighed. And doubtless whatever power our governors of the Corporation of Weavers may pretend and plead for, if they have any rationally, they had it at first from the whole body.'

The weavers expound the social compact

Having thus firmly established their rights, upon the sound basis of democratic first principle, the weavers proceed to dispose of the counter arguments based on royal grants, by quoting the earliest charter to show that 'there is not any one liberty that is granted to them but what is also granted to the meanest member of the said Company. .... So that it is clear this Grant was not to so many particular men but to the whole society and what power soever any person or persons were afterwards invested withall must of necessity be by the *consent*, *election* and *approbation* of the whole body; and if our Egyptian Taskmasters have any other Commission for their usurped power over us why do they not produce it? Certainly if they could, they would, but having none, they plead custom and Presidents, both which they will find but broken reeds to lean upon, but rotten props to support their worm-eaten Soveraignty[1].'

as a basis of industrial democracy

The commonalty of the founders in 'an addressment to the worshipful master, wardens, and assistants' of their

The founders

[1] *The Case of the Commonalty of the Corporation of Weavers of London truly stated.* Guildhall Library.

appeal to the law of nature and *jus gentium*

company in 1651, assume a tone of Christian remonstrance, and clothe their argument in more pious phraseology, but their attitude is fundamentally the same. 'Whereas it is most falsely and unjustly reported that we are those whose design it is to overthrow and bring into confusion the government of this company . . . we do for our parts declare that we are so tender of the reputation of you our Governors that we are in nowise willing to do anything of a disparaging reflection upon you, but to attend the providence of God for a reducement of ourselves to our primitive rights and privileges, and this we know is justifiable both by the law of God of Nature and of Nations, the motive being the consideration of the engagements that lieth upon you to preserve the liberties of these people over whom you rule. For very sensible we are of many things done in the exercise of your power altogether inconsistent with the laws of righteousness, the rules of safety, and our public good. Therefore seeing men in all ages have through their supine carelessness degenerated from the righteousness of their first principles . . . suffer us to persuade you to a recollection of all those things that are held up on corrupt customs. . . . Now we humbly desire you would let us have the Charter of the Company read—without which we are in no rational capacity to know our privileges—but we shall be led in a way of ignorance and blindness as we have been hitherto all our days, doing things we know not why for ends we know not what[1].'

The ruling cloth-workers refute democracy out of Genesis

There was not wanting similar high argument on the other side. A member of the Clothworkers' Court produced the crowning example of this method when in attempting to confute the democratic opinions prevalent in his own company, he cited the instance of the concentration of light in the sun and moon as a precedent for the monopoly of power employed by the Court of Assistants. 'We doubt not to say that God in the beginning did not only give a resemblance of Politicall power, when the Light created on the first, was on the fourth day contracted in those two great Rulers of the world, but that he did it according to Ordinances, for the Psalmist speaking of Heaven and Earth saith: They continue this day according to thy Ordinances (Psalm 119); and therefore called the Ordinances of heaven and earth. (Jer. 33). . . . And as God in the 2 Kings 17 complaineth, That they neither feared God nor did after their Ordinances nor after their customes: so (and not without cause) do the present Governours complain at this present

[1] W. M. Williams, *Annals of the Founders' Company*, p. 108.

of our dissenting brethren.' These, however, are but ornamental preliminaries to the main argument which is based, not without a considerable amount of sophistry, upon the charters and ordinances of the company[1]. As a rule the possessors of power content themselves with appealing to the usage of the previous two centuries.

The Weavers' Company cite the case of Corporations

The rulers of the Weavers' Company, it is true, had a vague notion that their privileges had been confirmed by Magna Charta, but they did not omit to provide their claims with a much sounder legal foundation. They pointed out that 'this manner of electing the officers of corporation by a certain select number of rank and degree (as is practised in London and other popular Cities) hath long been resolved in a case of Law by all the Judges to be good and agreeable with the Law for the avoiding of popular disorder and confusion (notwithstanding the word Commonalty specified in the Charter) as may clearly appear in the Lord Cooke's fourth report, fol. 77–78, touching Corporations[2].'

Widespread character of the movement and its Puritan sympathies

It is highly probable that few of the companies containing a rank and file of craftsmen escaped the contagion of the democratic movement. Exceedingly scanty as the published records of the companies are, we have an account of a crisis of this kind in no less than seven: the Pewterers (1641)[3], the Stationers (1661)[4], the Saddlers (1646)[5], the Clothworkers (1647–51), the Weavers (1648), the Founders (1651), and the Clockmakers (1656)[6]. In several cases the interference of the House of Commons was invoked on behalf of the craftsmen, not only on the ground of principle but because of the support they had rendered to the popular cause, to which they declared their rulers were unfriendly. 'At the beginning of the war,' say the Weavers, 'many of us and our servants engaged for the Parliament and in their absence they (the foreigners admitted by the Company) being generally malignant, staying at home . . . by degrees got all the trading' with the consequence they add that hundreds of them have been driven to become 'Porters,

[1] *The Government of the Fullers, Shearmen and Clothworkers of London as proved by their Charters and Ordinances.* A copy of this tract is to be found in the British Museum and Guildhall Libraries. The Clothworkers' Company reprinted it, 1881.

[2] *A Breviate of the Weavers' Business before the Hon^ble Committee of the House of Commons in Star Chamber*, 1648, p. 4. Brit. Mus.

[3] C. Welch, *Hist. of Pewterers' Company*, ii. p. 105.

[4] *Petition of Master and Workmen Printers to the House of Commons*, British Museum, 669, f $\frac{9}{7}$.

[5] J. W. Sherwell, *Hist. of Saddlers' Company*, p. 152.

[6] Atkins and Overall, *History of Clockmakers*, p. 60.

Labourers, Waterbearers, Chimneysweepers, Saltcryers and Small-cholemen [1].' And the Commonalty of the Founders, after their claim 'to an equal power with the Court of Assistants in government and authority without distinction of persons,' had been denied by the rulers of their company, appealed against them to the House of Commons, declaring that 'the major parte of them are notoriously disaffected to the present Government and upon all opportunities have manifested their malignity in words and deeds and that they do countenance the Clarke of the Company who is a Mocker and Scoffer of all manner of godliness and holiness and goodness, in conniving at and passing over his unfaithfulness [2].'

Joint committee of cloth-workers discuss the constitution

To such appeals the Long Parliament in its most revolutionary period could not turn a deaf ear. The commonalty of the weavers received permission to manage their elections by the choice of 140 representatives to act for the whole body [3]; and though the Court of Assistants forcibly kept these delegates out of the Hall, some concession to the theory of popular government seems to have been made for a time. In the records of the Clothworkers it is possible to follow the history of the movement in that company in some detail, but it will here suffice to indicate its main features and its result. On January 18, 1648, certain propositions made by the wardens and others of the yeomanry having been read by the Court of Assistants, 'the Yeomanry were called in and upon debate thereof at large . . . it was agreed that for the conservation of peace and unity in the whole body of this Company . . . that six gentlemen of this Company and six more of the Yeomanry should joyne together as one Committee and debate the matters in question as well amongst themselves as by advice of Councell if need shall require [4].'

The yeomanry demand universal suffrage

At the first meeting of the Committee, the matter in question being whether the election of officers were not in the master wardens and commonalty according to the letter of the Charter, the 'Case of Corporations' as reported by Coke was cited as proving that elections by a selected number were good and allowable in law. Upon this point the representatives of the yeomanry desired to consult with their counsel. At the next meeting the yeomanry members presented the opinion of two counsellors that the right of

[1] *Case of the Commonalty of Weavers.*
[2] Williams, *Annals of Founders*, pp. 34, 35.
[3] *Case of the Commonalty of Weavers.*
[4] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, of that date.

election was vested in master, wardens and commonalty. 'But it appeared,' says the record, 'that they had not stated the case right, neither informed them of the ancient custom of this company.' So there was nothing more done. The week after this, the committee for the yeomanry presented in writing to the rest of the committee a protestation made by the commonalty against the ordinances of the Company, 'and declared them invalid and no further to bind them.' The Court of Assistants refused to yield the points in dispute, but offered to refer them to the Lord Mayor, and then the matter appears for a time [1] to have dropped.

Reference to Council for Trade, and compromise

At the end of the year, however, when another election of officers was about to take place, the representatives of the yeomanry demanded that a 'common hall' should be called for that purpose [2], and, on meeting with another refusal, at once appealed to Parliament. The 'Council for the advance of Trade' heard both sides [3], and, two years later, was still hearing them at intervals [4]. At last in October, 1651, a compromise was struck. The wardens and assistants of the yeomanry were henceforward to retain the quarterage and fines levied upon the yeomanry, they were to have jurisdiction in all disputes arising out of handicraft matters, and they were to choose the beadle and the informer [5].

The larger masters are separated from the rank and file

It is to be observed that what was thus conceded was very different from what was originally demanded. The wardens of the yeomanry were not elected by the rank and file of small masters and journeymen. They were nominated from above by the Court of Assistants out of the leading manufacturers. When the commonalty were insisting on their right to universal suffrage, the wardens of the yeomanry then in office declared themselves against it [6]. They were in fact the representatives, not of the popular movement, but of the industrial interest; and the Court of Assistants had adopted the policy of making concessions to the industrial interest in order to take the sting out of the popular movement. Upon due reflection many of the employing class, who had a grievance against the exclusiveness of the Court of Assistants, must have realized that they had more to fear than to gain from such a revolutionary movement as was in progress amongst the rank and file.

[1] *Clothworkers' Court Book*, Jan. 29, Feb. 5, 20, Apr. 18.
[2] Ibid., Dec. 19, 1648. [3] Ibid., Jan. 23, 1649.
[4] Ibid., Mar. 15, Apr. 17, Oct. 23, Dec. 7, 1649; Jan. 3, Feb. 11, Mar. 18, April 8–15, Oct. 6, 1651.
[5] Ibid., Oct. 24, 1651. [6] Ibid., Dec. 19, 1648.

The journeyman class already making itself heard

It was the day of the 'Levellers' and of the 'Diggers [1],' and there can be no doubt that in the camp of the malcontents there were to be found, not only a mass of small masters fast sinking into the position of workmen, but also a number of that growing class of journeymen which within another twenty years was to be forming organizations of its own. The demand for universal suffrage included the journeymen, who in some companies at least were reckoned as freemen [2]. The leaders of the commonalty of the weavers supplied their cause with funds by collecting the journeymen's quarterage [3]; and the petition of the Printers to the House of Commons at this time refers to its promoters as 'the poore Freemen and Journeymen Printers oppressed and kept in bondage all their lives,' and as 'made perpetual bondmen to serve some few of the rich . . . upon such conditions and for such hire, and at such times as the Masters think fit [4].' It was undoubtedly at this epoch that the spirit of modern industrial democracy was born; and Mr. Morley, in his recent study of Cromwell, displays nowhere more admirable insight than when, in describing Oliver's negotiations with the army at Saffron Walden in 1647, he says, 'the whole scene and its tone vividly recall the proceedings of a modern trade union in the reasonable stages of a strike [5].'

III

The principle of forbidding craftsmen to form corporations

The democratic movement within the companies was the rally of a dying cause. As far as its immediate object was concerned, the practical results were very slight. After the Restoration they entirely disappeared, and the older influences resumed complete possession of the disputed ground. But there still existed the possibility that the excluded class should form itself into new corporations, and so gain the necessary legal authority for the defence of its interests. Attempts in this direction continued to be made, and it now remains to be shown how this door also was gradually closed on the industrial rank and file. The question as to whether an incorporation should be granted or not had hitherto been generally argued on grounds of prescription or of expediency. The objection was raised

[1] G. P. Gooch, *Democracy in the seventeenth century*, chapter vi.

[2] *The Government of the Fullers, Shearmen, and Clothworkers, &c.*, pp. 4, 6.

[3] *Breviate of the Weaver's Business*, British Museum, p. 6.

[4] *An abstract of the general grievances of the poore Freemen and Journeymen Printers*, addressed to the House of Commons, in the Guildhall Library.

[5] J. Morley, *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 221.

as a rule by a corporation already in the field, that the proposed new grant would be an encroachment on its own privileges, and would weaken the authority by which the industry was controlled. Apart from these considerations, it was not claimed that the privilege of incorporation belonged to one class of the community to the exclusion of another. The small masters who sought to protect themselves by a charter were still master craftsmen with journeymen and apprentices under them, and might seem indeed to be the nearest inheritors of the traditions of the old craft gild.

expounded by the leather-sellers, 1619

But gradually as the functions of the craftsman and the trader became more and more separate, as the latter gained control of all the older London gilds while the former sank into a position of subordination and dependence, the idea began to emerge that the incorporation of craftsmen was a dangerous innovation. Thus the leathersellers, when in 1619 they were opposing the glovers' petition, not only declared that the latter aimed at a 'playne Monopoly and a Confederacy,' but added: 'It will be a President to all the Mechanick trades about London to attempt the like, which wilbe such a Rent and innovation in the city as we may see the beginning, but can hardlie discerne what will be the end thereof.' The glovers in their reply did not venture to question the principle involved in this argument, but claimed that their case constituted an exception to the general rule, 'though in other trades the shopkeepers growing riche do make the workemen their underlings, yet they suffer them according to their increase of ability to become like themselves and in the meantime to exercise the favour and privilege of their company and society'; but the leathersellers, they declare, 'having injuriously driven us from our seats within the city and liberties are like chaungelings in our cradle.'

controverted by the printers, 1663

Between the date of this controversy and 1663 the forces of criticism and of speculation had dealt boldly and freely with every aspect of social organization, industrial as well as political. The manifesto of the printers, who made an attempt in that year to gain incorporation and so become independent of the stationers, does not hesitate to meet an objection similar to that of the leathersellers by an appeal to first principles. 'But let them' (the printers), it says, 'be supposed mechanics in this sense, that is, such as are below the dignity of Shopkeepers, must they not therefore have the management of their own affairs?' The printers go on to cite instances of the self-regulation of handicrafts such as weaving, painting, plastering, joinery, &c., tending to show

that 'the meanest have been put into distinct associations and impowered to make byelaws for their better subsistence.' Not content, however, with this defensive attitude, they proceed to carry war boldly into the enemy's country. Shopkeepers, they declare, are but accidental, like suckers springing out of the roots of the handicrafts. 'For without the clothier what were the draper, without the hatmaker where were the haberdashers, and without the printer where were the bookseller? Yea, having the clothier what need (necessarily) is there of the draper . . . and having the printer there is no fear of wanting books though there were no bookseller[1].'

The City Council opposes new incorporations

With these tendencies in progress it was not to be expected that the city authorities, representing in the main the interests of capital, would favour new attempts at incorporation. When the Paviors' Company in 1673 subscribed money to obtain a charter, the city entered a caveat against their application[2]. Similarly in 1698, the basket-makers were refused permission by the Court of Aldermen to seek incorporation, though they had made acknowledgement of their error in previously petitioning the King for that purpose[3]. The report of a Committee of Aldermen on a petition of the Carpenters' Company in 1681 gives a clear indication of the motives which underlay the policy of the city council. The carpenters had made a request that all apprentices to their trade might be compelled to take their freedom in their company. The committee reported that it could find nothing prejudicial to the City in the proposal 'for that sufficient provision is made against Combinations and confederacies for the manner and prizes of their work by the 2–3 Edward VI, c 15 and 5 Elizabeth, c 4[4].'

The wage-earning sawyers refused incorporation

But the case which best serves to illustrate the turning-point which has now been reached in the history of industrial organization, is the attempt of the sawyers to gain incorporation in 1670. The sawyers were employed by members of the Carpenters', Joiners', and Shipwrights' Companies; and in 1655 the carpenters had obtained an order from the Lord Mayor's Court for the regulation of their wages. The movement of 1670 is a pretty sure sign of a previously existing combination, and their employers

[1] *State Papers Dom., Charles II,* lxxxviii. 133, 'A brief discourse concerning Printers and Printing.'

[2] C. Welch, *Paviors' Company*, p. 2, Guildhall Library.

[3] Cf. also a tract on the history of the Gardeners' Company entitled *Adam Armed*, British Museum, 712 m 1 (10).

[4] E. B. Jupp, *History of Carpenters' Company*, p. 315.

declared that they had raised their price per load during the past twenty-five years from 5*s*. to 6*s*. and then from 6*s*. to 8*s*. and 9*s*. The nature of the objections successfully raised by the carpenters and others against the sawyers' application, shows clearly how similar the objects of their proposed incorporation were to those of the eighteenth-century trade union. The carpenters in conjunction with the joiners and shipwrights state that the sawyers are labourers who work by the day for wages, or by the load, and that the material is in every case provided by the employer. If they are incorporated, the smallest combination amongst them will bring the building trades to a standstill, as experience has sufficiently shown in the past even without incorporation. Moreover their main object is to exclude 'all those sort of Labourers who daily resort to the city of London and parts adjacent, and by that means keepe the wages and prizes of these sorts of labourers att an equal and indifferent rate' and their success would be 'an evill president, all other Labourers, to Masons, Bricklayers, Plaisterers, &c. having the same reason to alledge for incorporation[1].'

meeting-point of transformed gild and trade union

Here we have a combination of workers endeavouring to appropriate the small masters' method of incorporation to the protection of their own status as wage-earners. Almost at the same moment, as we shall presently see, a body of wage-earners in another trade is found attempting to use its inherited share in an existing corporation for the same ends. By its failure along these traditional lines, the wage-earning class was driven into secret combinations, from the obscurity of which the trade union did not emerge till the nineteenth century. At this point then, it may be said that the latest phase of the transformed gild and the earliest phase of the trade union meet and blend.

Note.—A final example of an unsuccessful attempt to gain legal recognition for an industrial combination may be appropriately taken from the closing year of the seventeenth century. In 1699 the coal porters on the river Thames petitioned the House of Commons that a bill might be brought in to establish them 'a Fellowship under such Government and Rules as shall be thought meet after the manner of the Watermen, Carmen, Porters, and Coachmen,' but the motion being made was passed in the negative. *House of Commons' Journals*, xiii. p. 69.

IV

The silk-hatters'

Among existing trade unions there is probably none that better represents the older traditions of unionism than

[1] Jupp, *Carpenters' Company*, p. 307.

union a persistent organization

that of the journeymen hatters of Great Britain and Ireland. In spite of the changes which this national organization has inevitably undergone during its century of existence, its original features have to a remarkable extent been preserved. This is the more striking in that the hatting industry has, during the same period, passed through a revolution in technique. The present members of the 'Fair Trade' Union are makers of silk hats, and follow a craft which has scarcely a single process in common with that of their predecessors of a century ago. Felt-making, which was the hatters' original craft, has been largely taken over by machinery. It is carried on chiefly in the provinces, where new combinations among the workers have arisen, more adapted to the different conditions of employment. The silk-hatters have inherited the traditions of the old felt and beaver-makers, because, although the technical process of their craft is different, the economic conditions under which they work are almost precisely the same. There is practically no machinery, little division of labour, and the silk hat, like the old-fashioned beaver, is an article of fashion consumed by a limited class which is mainly resident in large cities, or at any rate prefers to make its purchases there. Cheapness is not sought at the expense of style and quality, and consequently the skilled workman, if backed by an efficient combination, can command a high price for his labour. It is the continuity of these conditions which has given the Fair Trade Union so long a lease of life. This is clear from the fact that when the silk hat began to replace the beaver, the union was able gradually to transfer its control from the old trade to the new. Its members learned the new processes, and little by little the making of felts was left to be undertaken by the, perhaps, less skilled, certainly less efficiently combined, workers in the provinces.

Its activity in the eighteenth century

We need not be surprised to find that a combination of such tenacity has even a longer history than it claims for itself. The union as a national organization dates itself from 1798; but it had existed in London at any rate long before that period. A petition of the master hatmakers of London to the House of Commons in 1777 states that the journeymen have entered into a combination called a Congress, that they pass by-laws, inflict fines, and prevent the increase of apprentices; and one of the masters declared to a committee of the House that he had been compelled on pain of a strike to discharge five of his fifty journeymen who had refused to pay the twopence a week levied by

Congress[1]. The power which, according to this and other similar evidence, the men's combination had already acquired and which, through the trying times of the next half-century, it steadily maintained, could scarcely have been of very recent growth. But with the exception of a reference to a strike in the Annual Register for 1768, there seems to be no published evidence of the union's previous existence.

The traditional connexion with the Feltmakers' Company,

To a certain extent this want may be supplied by the records of the Feltmakers' Company. Some historic connexion between the union and the company is suggested by the traditions of the journeymen hatters themselves. Amongst the Place MSS. in the British Museum there is preserved a list of resolutions agreed to by the journeymen during a dispute in 1820. At the head of this document is a curious device representing a tramping hatter who has just arrived in town and is receiving the refreshment and relief due to him by the rules of the union. Around this device are printed several traditional or historic dates:—'Hats first invented 1456. First made in London 1510. The Feltmakers' Company were first incorporated in London 1604; and again by charter 1667. Blanks first instituted 1798[2].'

substantiated by the conservatism of the journeymen

The appropriation thus implied of the traditions of the company by the union is exceedingly characteristic of the conservative temper of the journeymen hatters. One cannot read the hatter's evidence before the Royal Commission of 1824, without being struck by the relations of friendliness and mutual respect which had evidently long prevailed between masters and men. The masters admit that the men's claims were generally reasonable and that disputes had as a rule been settled by compromise. And an appeal made by the men to the masters during the strike of 1820 is clothed in the language of dignified remonstrance. The men repudiate the charge of idleness and drunkenness, more in sorrow than anger. 'For are there not among you those who have toiled in our ranks who have been raised by providence above their fellows? . . . We cannot suppose that the generality of our masters, from the generous manner in which we have been treated by them, could have engendered such evil against us. . . . Nothing can ultimately tend to beneficial purposes in long protracted warfare, as we consider the interests of the one connected with the interests of the other; but that the sacrificing ourselves to an additional number of apprentices would be

[1] S. and B. Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, p. 46.
[2] *British Museum, Add. MSS.*, 27799, 77.

entailing on our posterity misery and disgrace, and would in nowise be advantageous to you, as there has always been found by the antient laws and customs a sufficient number of men for every purpose connected with the trade. We remain, Gentlemen, with respect, &c.[1]' The deferential tone of this remonstrance, the strong appeal to common traditions on the part of a trade union which had had an independent existence for at least half a century, and the evident shock which the prosecutions for combination subsequently instituted by the masters occasioned to the feelings of the men, justify us not only in assuming a long experience of mutual tolerance, but also in emphasizing the element of continuity between the later phase of industrial organization and the one immediately preceding it.

Combined action of journeymen in 1667

And it is a remarkable fact that from the very beginning of the extant records of the Feltmakers' Company, which date from the Charter of Charles II, we have clear indications of the combined action of the journeymen. The charter was granted in June, 1667. In October of the same year a committee of aldermen who had been appointed to consider a petition of the journeymen feltmakers against the master, wardens, and assistants, recommended a number of articles which were duly inserted in the by-laws of the company. No member is to employ a foreigner except he be admitted to the company; and such foreigner is to pay twenty pounds for admittance. Journeymen are to give and receive a month's warning; and they are to make good spoilt work; the damage in case of dispute to be assessed by two masters, one chosen by the journeymen. Finally 'that the journeymen may not by combination or otherwise excessively at their pleasure raise their wages,' a piecework list is to be fixed annually and presented to the Court of Aldermen[2].

They collect money for the confirmation of gild regulations.

In July of the following year the master and wardens were called before the mayor for neglecting to get their ordinances confirmed by the judges, when they declared that they were only hindered by want of money to defray the charge. Thereupon the journeymen present offered to contribute *2s.* and *2s. 6d.* apiece towards this object; and it was ordered that the masters should make a liberal subscription as an example[3]. The ordinances in question, so far as they regulate the industry, do so in the spirit of the mediaeval gild. While their main aim is to preserve the status of the

[1] *British Museum, Add. MSS.*, 27799, 80.
[2] *Feltmakers' Court Book*, Oct. 8, 1667.
[3] Ibid., July 7, 1668.

small master, they incidentally protect that of the journeyman. By strictly limiting the number of apprentices and by forbidding all indirect employment (i.e. 'weighing out stuff to piece-masters') they hinder the development of the 'large industry.' An ordinance of the same character, which gave rise subsequently to much dispute, forbids the employment of boys (as 'sindging boys') after the age of eighteen unless they are duly apprenticed. It is very likely that these ordinances, which had no doubt been handed down from an earlier date, were already felt to have a cramping influence on the trade. What concerns us most in this connexion is the action of the journeymen in getting them enforced. That and the previous appeal to the Court of Aldermen reveal two facts as to the condition of the journeymen; in the first place that they were capable of successful combination; and in the second that, though excluded from any share in its direction, they had still an interest in the constitution of the company, and sought to attain their objects by its means.

and try to enforce them by prosecutions.

The first extant Court Book of the company which extends from 1676 to 1682 reveals an important development in this situation. In the earlier years the journeymen still have recourse to the Court for the redress of their grievances. In 1678 six of them appear and charge a certain master with employing foreigners and refusing work to freemen[1]; and in the same year a master is fined for omitting to give a month's warning[2]. But the solidarity of the gild-relation is being gradually destroyed by the expansion of the trade. In November 1680 the journeymen petition against the number of sindging boys, and it is ordered that no person shall have above one at one time[3]. The dispute, however, continues and in 1681 the journeymen bring an action at the Surrey Assizes, with what result is not stated[4]. But it is significant that the countercharge with which the masters meet the action of the journeymen is that of refusing to pay their quarterage[5]. The contributions of the journeymen were doubtless diverted into a common fund to meet their own legal expenses.

Immigration of Huguenot hatters

The next ten years (for which the Feltmakers' records are wanting) witnessed a most important crisis in the industry. The French trade which had been the most formidable rival of the English, and had succeeded largely in driving it out of the Spanish market, was almost de-

[1] *Feltmakers' Court Book*, Dec. 2, 1678.
[2] Ibid., Sept. 23, 1678.
[3] Ibid., Nov. 15, 1680.
[4] Ibid., June 13, 1681.
[5] Ibid., July 18, 1681.

stroyed at a blow by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, and many of the French hatters came to settle in England[1]. This act of supreme impolicy on the part of Louis XIV was, of course, of enormous benefit to English commerce; and in no direction was the impetus more felt than by the hat trade. But to the company the event probably seemed an unmixed evil.

leads to employment of country journeymen

Apart from the direct effects of competition, there was an indirect effect of more importance in the present connexion. The Frenchmen set up, some of them on a large scale, outside the city, at Wandsworth and Battersea; and there they naturally formed centres of attraction to the country journeymen who had hitherto been jealously excluded from the benefits of the London trade. What rendered such exclusion practicable was, no doubt, apart from the immobility of labour in those days, the inferior character of the work done by the country feltmakers. But the force that really maintained the exclusion was the combined determination of the London men, using hitherto as its instrument the ordinances of the company. How great was the distance between the status of the London and that of the country worker is strikingly illustrated by a number of petitions presented to Parliament in 1698 by various feltmakers' companies in the north of England, praying that 'women and maids of inferior quality' may be compelled to wear felt hats, and declaring that many poor people whom they had kept at work were become objects of charity[2]. And the Committee of the House of Commons in recommending the adoption of this remedy (only lost by two votes) state that it would set at work *100,000 poor people more than are already employed*, and that the greater part of the persons so to be employed are aged men, women and children, and such as are relievable by charity. After making every allowance for the evident exaggeration of this, it remains clear that the London men had everything to lose by the admittance to competition with them of journeymen accustomed to country conditions.

The company finally decides against employing 'foreigners,'

The masters, on the other hand, were sure to find it to their interest, as the trade expanded, to draw upon such an abundant source of cheap labour. This motive was, however, balanced by another. As members of the company they could not expect to enjoy their monopoly without observing those ordinances which secured the status of the men. They

[1] S. Smiles, *The Huguenots*, p. 267.
[2] *House of Commons' Journals*, Mar. 3–6, 1698.

wavered therefore between two possible lines of action. They might either prosecute the new-comers for infringement of their privileges, or they might meet the Frenchmen on their own ground by letting loose the forces of free trade. The latter of these courses was partially adopted in February, 1691, by a resolution empowering any lawful feltmaker to set at work any foreign (country) journeyman in the parishes of Wandsworth, Battersea, and Lambeth in the manufacture of hats of the French make, 'so that all theire Majesties Subjects and Freemen of London might have the same priviledges that the French and foreigners had[1].' But the adoption of this policy was found to have many inconvenient effects, 'certain Frenchmen and other persons, not qualified to work, making other use of the said Order than was intended.' In May 1694, therefore, the order was repealed, and the company returned to more conservative principles and took its stand once more upon the ordinances.

and against giving out materials to 'piece-masters'

According to these regulations all work must be done under the direct supervision of a qualified master. Piece-work, i.e. the weighing out of stuff by the employer to be made up at the worker's own home or elsewhere, was strictly forbidden. Yet the growth of the trade was sure to favour this method of employment, since it found scope for the capitalist who, without being a feltmaker, had an adequate knowledge of the materials, whilst it enabled the journeyman who had little or no capital to set up, in a sort, for himself. As we might expect, it was the skinners, cutters of coney, and wool merchants, who thus 'weighed out the stuff,' and against these we find the feltmakers, in November 1694, preparing to take legal proceedings[2]. The company continued to resist this natural development till 1755, when the ordinances in question were, along with the one against the employment of foreign journeymen, formally repealed. Meanwhile the piece-master who took out work in this way continued to exist in spite of the ordinances; and the journeyman who, for whatever reason, was out of a place, had a resource to fall back upon; a fact which very much strengthened the independence of his attitude.

Conflict brewing between masters and men

In the complicated situation thus briefly analysed, the point perhaps most worthy of notice is the opportunist attitude alike of masters and men towards the ordinances. The men, whilst willing to invoke their authority for the exclusion of 'foreigners' and the prohibition of unskilled labour, are prepared upon occasion to have illegal recourse to piecework and

[1] *Feltmakers' Court Book*, May 14, 1694. [2] Ibid., Nov. 14, 1694.

combination. The masters, on the other hand, while using their charter to secure a monopoly, to harry the Frenchmen, and to suppress the 'piece-masters,' are at the same time tempted to relieve the pressure of competition by employing cheaper labour from the country. Under these circumstances a conflict was sure to break out sooner or later; and in the autumn of 1695 we hear the first mutterings of the storm. On September 23, one of the masters was charged before the Court with employing country journeymen; but upon his explaining that they were only engaged upon coarse felts the charge was dismissed. And next year, in February, when the free journeymen complained that a number of country journeymen had just left the French hatmakers to work in Southwark, the temporizing order was made that they should be allowed to continue one month only.

The company tries to keep down wages

On November 16, 1696, the matter came to a crisis. On that day the Court fixed a list of rates for the making of hats for the ensuing year, and ordered that if the free journeymen did not accept these rates, it should be lawful for any master living outside the freedom of the city to employ country journeymen so long as the latter brought proof of their apprenticeship. The power to fix an annual list of wages would seem to have been left unexercised for a number of years. Indeed there is no mention of any such list in the extant records later than the one embodied in the ordinance of 1668. Since that time the price of food had gone up, and wages in the hat trade had, to some extent at least, followed. This advance was still in progress in 1696, and the company's assessment of wages was made with a view of checking it. According to one statement of the masters, the amount in dispute was 3*d.* out of 3*s.* 6*d.* a day. In another place they declare the men can earn 'from twelve to twenty shillings a week and dyett.' If either of these estimates be near the truth, the journeyman hatter was then as now amongst the best paid of skilled workmen, and it is not surprising that in face of the competition of the immigrants and of the influx of cheaper labour, the attempt should be made to reduce his wages.

Combined resistance of journeymen

The attempt, however, was met with all the promptness and vigour of a well-organized society. On the next Court-day a deputation of twelve appeared on behalf of all the London journeymen, and, declaring they had come to a resolution among themselves not to accept any less wages than what they formerly received, desired that the late order might be set aside. In the meantime they had not

confined themselves to peaceful resolutions; but had proceeded to make an example of a journeyman who had gone on working at the reduced rates. According to the master's statement they stirred up the apprentices to seize upon him as he was working, to tie him in a wheelbarrow, and 'in a tumultuous and riotous manner to drive him therein through all the considerable places in London and Southwark [1].'

Transition to the Trade Union

With these evidences of united action before us we scarcely need to be told that the men had 'Clubs' where they entered into unlawful combination and 'raised several sums of money for the abetting and supporting such of them who should desert their masters' service.' A combination of journeymen was of course no new thing. The important question about this combination is: how far did it resemble a modern trade union? or, to put the question in another form, how far did it possess the conditions essential to continuous existence and successful activity? In its first form the question can only be answered by the facts already narrated, which seem to exhibit industrial combination undergoing a process of evolution, and reveal some at least of the elements of trade unionism in process of detachment from their connexion with earlier economic ideas. The answer to the second form of the question is to be supplied from the remainder of our narrative.

Subsequent course of the strike

The dispute, which began in the manner described, lasted for three years and ended to all appearance in a victory for the men. That it should have lasted so long without entirely dislocating the trade was due to the unfixity of a transition stage. There were, as we have seen, several competing forms of industrial organization in the field, and neither masters nor men were limited to one set of conditions. Probably, however, the skilled workman found a better resource in becoming a piece-master than did the qualified master in employing the unskilled country journeyman; so that those skilled workmen who remained in the service of the company would have their choice between competing masters; especially as the company had in 1692 repealed the ordinance requiring a month's notice on either side. Towards the end of 1697 we find the masters driven in self-defence to re-enact this ordinance with the addition that no master is to employ a journeyman who does not bring a certificate from his previous master [2].

Legal duel

Previous to this, measures had been taken against those

[1] *Feltmakers' Court Book*, Nov. 23, 1698. [2] Ibid., Nov. 25 1697.

between masters and men

who set up as piece-masters, and did work for the coney-cutters and wool merchants. Some attempt was made by the journeymen at an accommodation in this matter, based on common hostility to the French trade; but the majority of the masters refused to tolerate 'piecework' and the prosecutions continued[1]. The men's society had remained in active existence. Only a short time before, the masters had appointed a committee to deal with its 'disorderly meetings'; and it now proceeded to retaliate by bringing actions against the masters for the illegal employment of sindging boys[2].

Two abortive attempts at an accommodation

In this legal duel which was carried on during the earlier half of 1698 the men very probably got the worst of it. At any rate, on June 20 three of their number came to the Feltmakers' Court, on behalf of themselves and the rest, seeking an accommodation. They proposed that all matters relating to the trade should stand upon the same footing as in 1682; and offered to drop the prosecutions concerning sindging boys. The Court after long debate informed them that if they would give an 'ingenuous account and full discovery' of their combinations and collections of money by Wednesday next, they might expect some favour. The journeymen promised to comply, and appeared on the appointed day with an account of the money contributed by them and of the way in which it had been spent; 'and desired that all suits might be forborne and that they might be permitted to make a hat for themselves, and acknowledged they were guilty of combination and would plead so to the indictment[3].'

With this evidence in its possession the Court proceeded to order the prosecution of several journeymen, and directed the master of the company to deal with the demands of the deputation. There is no indication of the promised favour being granted. The prosecutions seem to have borne hardly upon the journeymen. In August they again sought an accommodation, and, in accordance with an award of the two members of Parliament for Southwark, submitted to terms which have all the appearance of a complete surrender. Fifteen of the men in addition to those indicted are to sign a declaration in which they admit their guilty combination and renounce it for the future; and further promise to be obedient to the by-laws of the company, and to collect money amongst themselves for the prosecution of the French

[1] *Feltmakers' Court Book*, Nov. 29, 1697.
[2] Ibid., Jan. 1, 1698.
[3] Ibid., June 23, 1698.

feltmakers. As against all this the only concession to be made by the masters is the withdrawal of the prosecutions[1].

Possibly this may be a full account of the arrangement; and it is to be noted that in 1821 the men under stress of prosecution made a similar renunciation of their union which did not in the least affect its existence. But more probably other concessions to be made by the masters were the subject of a tacit understanding. At any rate the one-sided arrangement broke down almost immediately. In September we hear that the men continue to exact the former extraordinary prices, so that the masters are induced to have recourse to the old remedy of presenting a list to the Court of Aldermen. Out of nine prices in this list three show an advance of about 10 per cent. over the corresponding prices in the list issued two years previously[2]; so that the masters must have given ground in the meantime; and shortly after its publication a master was summoned and fined for making a similar advance in a fourth price[3].

The masters make some concessions

The whole dispute was thus, at the end of 1698, opened up afresh; the country journeymen, whose exclusion had obviously formed a part of the recent settlement, were called in once more, though precautions were taken to prevent them setting up for themselves[4]; and the prosecutions recommenced with vigour, some forty or fifty of the journeymen being presented by the Grand Jury for refusing to work at the rates. The men on their part took up the challenge with spirit. It is clear that their combination and their resources remained intact and that they had good legal advice. By means of a writ of 'a certiorari' they contrived to remove the case from the Lord Mayor's Sessions into the Crown Office, so that it came before Lord Chief Justice Holt at the Kingston Assizes in the spring of 1699[5]. The Chief Justice made a Rule of Court referring the matter to the arbitration of the members for Surrey; whose decision, given in June, was a compromise. Legal proceedings were to be stayed, and the men were to get an advance on the masters' last list. If the revised list, which was subsequently approved by the Court of Aldermen, is compared with the previous lists put forward by the masters it becomes clear that the men's combination had not been entirely in vain[6].

The dispute referred to arbitration

[1] *Feltmakers' Court Book*, Aug. 5, 1698.
[2] Ibid., Sept. 23, 1698.
[3] Ibid., Dec. 13, 1698.
[4] Ibid., Dec. 19, 1698, Jan. 11, 1699.
[5] Ibid., Mar. 27, 1699.
[6] Ibid., Oct. 2, 1699.

RATES FOR MAKING 'WITH DYET'

Price of hat.	1667.		Nov. 1696.		Sept. 1698.		Oct. 1699.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
5*s.*	...			9		9		9
6*s.* to 7*s.*	...		1	0	1	0	1	0
8*s.* to 10*s.*	...		1	2	1	2	1	3
10*s.*	...		1	6	1	8	1	8
12*s.*	...		1	10	2	0	2	0
14*s.*	1	9	2	2	2	2	2	3
16*s.* and upwards.	2	3	2	4	2	6	2	6
18*s.*	2	3	2	6	2	6	2	6
Beaver.	2	9	3	0	3	0	3	2

The Court Book containing the above carries the record down to 1708, and as there is no further notice of serious difference with the journeymen as a body, it is likely that the award was accepted by them as satisfactory. It is probable too that they acquiesced in the continued prosecutions of 'piece-workers,' since it was not in their interests as a body to encourage this method of employment so long as they could secure good wages. Those who complain of the prosecutions are old men who say they cannot otherwise get work.

Subsequent probable expansion of the union

The next Court Book begins in 1727, but the records thenceforward contain less and less reference to the company's relations with the journeymen. The reason is not far to seek. The industry was rapidly growing. There was a large export trade to Spain and Portugal, to supply which some masters employed as many as a hundred men. To the requirements of such a trade the gild regulations were become more and more inadequate. Since the restriction on the number of apprentices remained, the increasing demand for labour could only be supplied from without, and the exclusion of foreigners had to be gradually abandoned. It was not till 1755 that the restrictive ordinances relating to foreigners and 'piecework' were formally abolished, but the masters had for some time tacitly ignored them. A master, giving evidence before a House of Commons' Committee in 1752, stated that he employed six 'foreigners' to one freeman, and that he did not hear of any prosecutions likely to issue on that account [1].

If the men acquiesced in this change, it is probable that their own combination was unmolested and that they

[1] House of Commons papers. Report on a Petition relating to the manufacture of hats, 1755. Evidence of Mr. Estcutt.

gradually widened it so as to include the new-comers. If they had not done so, their position must have been much weakened, and such evidence as we have tends to show that this did not happen.

It is not too much to assume therefore that the society which is found so completely organized in 1777 had had a more or less continuous existence for the greater part of a century. But whether this was so or not is a matter of very secondary importance. In any case the effectual combined action of the London feltmakers is no isolated or accidental phenomenon, but is representative of a general industrial development observable at this time both in England and on the continent[1]. A few words as to the subsequent course of that development will serve to complete the design of this book.

The reduction of the small master to a wage-earner

It was the growth of trading capita lwhich, by separating the craftsman from direct contact with the market, gave rise to those intermediate forms of industrial organization which have been grouped together under the term 'domestic system.' The decay of those forms and their ultimate displacement by the factory system was due to the growth of industrial capital. As long as the small master owned most of the industrial capital required for the exercise of his calling, he was not a mere wage-earner, however much he might be dependent on the capital of the trader. With the appearance of the industrial capitalist, who organized manufacture on a large scale and supplied not only the circulating but sometimes also the fixed capital, the small master was reduced either to the position of a journeyman, or to that of a wage-earning master scarcely distinguishable from a journeyman. The strong objection of the London feltmakers to the giving out of materials caused their development to take the first of these forms. But in many widespread industries, including country felt-making, the second form was more common. The Bethnal Green silk-weaver is a wage-earner of this type who still retains some features of the small master[2], and a large part of the felt-making in the North of England about the middle of the last century was carried on by wage-earning domestic masters who, though they found their own workshops and implements and took apprentices, had come to be called journeymen.

[1] Levasseur, *Hist. des classes ouvrières*, ii. pp. 383–90, cites instances of the activity of journeymen's combinations at Dijon, Darnetal (1688), of the Paris hatters in 1697, and of the Paris knitters in 1724. For German cases see Schmoller, *Umrisse*, &c., p. 389.

[2] Booth, *Life and Labour of the People of London*, i. p. 395.

explains the rise of Trade Unionism,

The labour troubles of the eighteenth century, which marked the beginnings of Trade Unionism, were mostly due to the efforts of this class of reduced small masters to organize themselves along with the journeymen on a common footing as wage-earners. In some of the most notable of these cases, e. g. the framework-knitters, the Sheffield cutlers, and the London silk-weavers, the industries concerned had been represented since the middle of the seventeenth century at least by a corporation similar to the Feltmakers' Company [1]. The history of the previous organization of 'domestic industry' in the country district would probably have much light cast upon it by the publication of county and assize records, but there exists at least one striking testimony to that kind of continuity of which this book has furnished many illustrations. In 1718 the Government issued a proclamation concerning a number of woolcombers and weavers, who had formed themselves into lawless clubs and societies which 'had illegally presumed to use a Common Seal and to act as Bodies Corporate [2].' This adoption of legal formalities is in itself sufficiently indicative of the spirit of imitation which was so powerful a factor in the transmission of the capacity for collective action. But its significance becomes much greater in the light of the fact that it was against the weavers and woolcombers of Devon and Somerset that the proclamation was especially directed, and that in 1639 King Charles had granted a charter of incorporation to the worsted-combers of Devon, who complained, however, that the sum they were asked to pay for it was far greater than they were able to raise amongst so many poor men [3]. It is exceedingly probable that patient local research would reveal many similar antecedents of trade unionism in the records of the country cloth trade.

which was hastened by English *laissez faire*

It need not be inferred from this, however, that any mysterious efficacy is to be attributed to the mere grant of a royal charter. On the contrary, it has perhaps hardly been sufficiently realized how much the growth of trade unionism in England is due to the prevalence of the principle of *laissez faire*. It has indeed been rightly insisted upon that there was a close connexion between the abandonment by the Government of the obsolete regu-

[1] Brentano, *On the history and development of Gilds*, pp. 115–21, 125–8; cf. S. and B. Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, pp. 32–3.

[2] Cunningham, *Growth*, &c., ii. p. 508.

[3] *State Papers Dom., Charles I*, ccclxi. 114, also *Privy Council Register*, Nov. 28, 1639; Feb. 6–13, 1644.

lative machinery of the sixteenth century and the rise of combinations amongst the wage-earning class; and no doubt the continuance of similar governmental regulations in France and Germany for some generations longer had much to do with the postponement of trade unionism on the continent. But there is another important aspect of the matter which should not be neglected. The passing of the Combination Acts, and the early prosecutions of trade unionists, should not blind us to the fact that it was the comparative freedom of England in the eighteenth century which alone made the combination of wage-earners possible. At the very moment when the workers of England were laying the foundations of a free organization, by the establishment of the 'tramping ticket' and the 'house of call,' the Governments of France and of Prussia were putting a veto on any such spontaneous popular development, by transferring these same institutions into the hands of the police, and utilizing them as part of the machinery of a more or less benevolent despotism[1].

[1] Schmoller, *Umrisse*, &c., pp. 430–42; M. Stieda, *Das Arbeitsbuch in Frankreich*, in *Preussische Jahrbücher*, liii.

APPENDIX A

I

EXTRACTS FROM THE CLOTHWORKERS' COURT BOOK, 1537–1639.

MAY 3. 29 HENRY VIII (1537). It^{m} the same day Thomas Saunders and John Willms were admytted to kepe howsse togethers for consideration that they had the stuffe of Master Wight, wiche stuffe Master Wight bought of William Mansell, considering that yt were better that they shuld have the stuffe then Master Wight shuld put yt to another one of another company. And so upon the same day they being admytted dyd pay xx^{s} for theyr admyssions.

JULY 3. 29 HENRY VIII. J. Fermer hath promised to pay x^{s} for his admyssion in this wyse following, that ys to say xii^{d}, at mychellmas next xii^{d}, and so every quarter xii^{d} tyll the same some be paid.

NOVEMBER. 32 HENRY VIII. See p. 46.

FEBRUARY 11. 33 HENRY VIII. Agreed that the byll made yn the name of the hole company to be put into the Parlyamente house shalbe first shewed to my lorde Mayor at a co^{r}te of Aldermen on Tuesday next.

FEBRUARY 23. 33 HENRY VIII. Monycion was given to T. M., W. S. fustyan sherers that they shuld no wyse sett any foreyns on worke.

MARCH 13. 33 HENRY VIII. J. C. to pay J. Ch. for a tenter which he had of him, v^{d} a weke so long as he hath kept yt, and that he shall leve yt as he found yt.

OCTOBER 16. 35 HENRY VIII. See p. 58.

NOVEMBER 7. 35 HENRY VIII. Agreed that R. M. shall paye to J. B. his Journeyman for a moneths wages v^{s} viii^{d} wherof he paid iiij^{s} iii^{d}.

NOVEMBER 6. 35 HENRY VIII. See p. 59.

APRIL 29. 37 HENRY VIII. Came diverse of the companye which occupye cottonyng, and desyred ayde of the house towards a sewte which they have before my lorde Mayre and Aldermen concerning that no freman shoulde putt any cloth to cottonyng to any foreyn but onely to fremen, who had answere that yf they could bryng yt aboute they shoulde have recompence of this house accordyng to reason.

MAY 4. 38 HENRY VIII. Whereas W. B. was indetted to H. A. in xix^{s} viij^{d}, yt was ordered that the said B. shall paye wekely to the said A. iiij^{d}, and that he whom settyth the said B. aworke shall wekely stay yt in his handes for the behalfe of the said A.

AUGUST 2. 38 HENRY VIII. C. T. had license to take now and then a carsey to shere tyll such tyme he be able to set upp.

NOVEMBER 10. 38 HENRY VIII. See p. 59.

NOVEMBER 16. 38 HENRY VIII. At this co^{r}te the master delyvered to the wardeyns of the yomanry viij^{li} xiij^{s} viij^{d} and they sealed a obligation for the paymt thereof again, wherein they be all joyntly bounde which obligation remayneth here yn the house.

NOVEMBER 24. 38 HENRY VIII. At this co^{r}te J. C. and D.'s wyffe which were at varyance for certen stuffe of hers which was layde to hym to gage, the bothe put the matter to this house, who ordered that the said woman shulde have ageyne a spice morter and a tyke of a bolster and also the said C. to give her ij^{s} which was paid her out of hande.

APRIL 11. 2 EDWARD VI. At this co^{r}te whereas Lawrence Cordeman and Roger Tordeyne were at varyance, forasmuch as the said Lawrence Cordeman goeth aboute to undermynde the said Tordeyne and to gett awaye his workemasters, yt was ordered that the one of theym shall not yn no wyse work to the others workemaster. And they bothe agreed to the same order.

OCTOBER 10. 2 EDWARD VI. At this co^{r}te yt ys agreed and ordered that whosoever from henceforth suffer other his wyffe or any of his mayden servaunts to worke openly other yn his shoppe or at his tenters, orells suffer any of them to carry other carsey or brode cloth thorou the streets or sheres to gryndinge, upon the payne of every time so offendinge xx^{d} to be payde w^{t}out any favour.

OCTOBER 10. 2 EDWARD VI. At this co^{r}te yt ys agreed that John Williamson shall have ij^{s} a weke to oversee the workemen that they kepe their houres.

MAY 8. 3 EDWARD VI. See p. 59.

APRIL 28. 5 EDWARD VI. At this co^{r}te yt ys agreed that where a mocyon was made by my lorde Mayor for the fyndyng of a skoller at the unyversitie, that this house shall yerely paye towardes the fyndynge of a skoller yerely fyve poundes.

OCTOBER 26. 5 EDWARD VI. Where Edward Rodwell put awaye his Jorneyman for certen mysbehaviours by hym doon as he sayeth, yt was ordered by this co^{r}te that the said Rodwell shall take his said Jorneyman ageyne orells to paye hym the full of his wages for the yere.

JULY 27. 6 EDWARD VI. Whereas J. A., T. W., N. R., Journeymen, were comytted to warde for the wrongful ynformacion of John Browne, yt was agreed that the said Browne shall paye them between then and Saterdaye next their wages and vj^{s} for their costes by them spent in the counter.

DECEMBER 8. 6 EDWARD VI. See p. 59.

JULY 13. 1 MARY. All the companye had warning to kepe their servaunts from unlawful assemblies and that they have no talke of the counsells matters as they wulle answere at their uttermoste perylls.

JANUARY 16. 1–2 MARY. The wardeyns of the yomanry brought

ynto the halle a newe cheste with iij lokkes and iij keyes to serve to put their money yn, wherein was by them put yn in redy money xiiij^{li} vi^{s} ij^{d}, the M^{r} of the company havyng one keye, the upper wardeyn of the yomanry another keye, and one of the assistence of the yomanry to have the third keye.

Also yt was agreed that the said Wardeyns of the Yomanry shall have such orders as hath bene here taken, concernynge such artycles as they ought amongst themselves to observe, to be entred yn their boke to th' intent they may better kepe them.

JULY 13. 2 MARY. Yt ys agreed that from hensforth all such apprentices as shall come out of their yeares, beyng of the handycraft, shall before they be sworne be tryed and seen by the wardeyns of the yeomanry, whether they be workemen able to serve yn the comenwelthe or not.

Also yt ys ordered and agreed that no man of the handycrafte shall by the space of two yeres next after his first settyng upp of house, kepe more apprentices at ones than one, upon payne to paye to th' use of the company xx^{s}.

Also yt ys ordered and agreed that every person of the said company which shall happen hereafter to be behynd of his quarterage or other duties due to be payde to th' use of the companye by the space of two yeares and then doo refuse to paye the same, shall not from thensforth kepe any apprentyce.

JULY 25. 5–6 PHILIP AND MARY. Yt ys agreed that yn consideration of the grete necessitie and nede of the handycrafte that there shalbe no generall dynner kept for the chosynge of new M^{r} and wardeyns these three years next ensuing, and that all those that shalbe M^{r} and wardeyns for the next two years next ensuinge this yere, evry M^{r} to paye x^{li} and every wardeyn vi^{li} xiij^{s} iiij^{d}. And that those that be now yn office of M^{r} and wardeyns graunted of their benevolence these somes following, that ys to saye:—M^{r} Ormiston vi^{li} xiii^{s} iiii^{d}, M^{r} Hayward x^{li}, M^{r} Christofer x^{li}, M^{r} Barnard vi^{li} xiii^{s} iiii^{d}, M^{r} William Petynger vi^{li} xiij^{s} iiii^{d}. All which somes of money soo to be payde yn forme aforesaide shalbe counted to th' use of the companye towards the bying and furniture of tasells for the welth and reliefe of the poore of the company.

Yt ys agreed that the upper wardeyns of the yomanry which hereafter shalbe for the space of these thre yeres shall paye towarde furniture of the said tasells vi^{li}, and every other of the said wardeyns to lyke use xl^{s}.

APRIL 17. 1 ELIZABETH. See p. 119.

DECEMBER 5. 2 ELIZABETH. See p. 119.

JANUARY 22. 2 ELIZABETH. See p. 114.

FEBRUARY 23. 2 ELIZABETH. Whereas W. Emerson hath lately without lycence sett up house and ys founde bothe for lak of substaunce and also for his demeanour, as namely for that he carrieth ale and

sometyme water and such other lyke vyle busynes, that he shall no longer kepe house.

JUNE 21. 2 ELIZABETH. See p. 117.

JANUARY 13. 4 ELIZABETH. See p. 61.

JUNE 9, 1563. See p. 120.

JULY 27, 1563. See p. 121.

JULY 7, 1565. See p. 120.

MAY 14, 1566. Whereas Rowland Matheryn hath set upp house w^t^ out lycence contrary to the ordenance and also kepeth a foreyn, yt is ordered that the saide Matheryn shall no longer kepe house but worke as a Jorneyman tyll he mend his condicions and be founde worthe of his own propre goods, x^li^.

JULY 10, 1566. See p. 60.

NOVEMBER 11–DECEMBER 13, 1566. See p. 115.

APRIL 8, 1567. This day sixe of the fullers, yn the name of the whole, cam and made request that none of the sheremen shulde from hensforthe make price with the merchaunts for the rowyng of clothes, butt that the fullers may be called to make their owne prices and receyve their owne money for their wokemanshipp. Sixe of the sheremen beynge called and made prevy thereof, answered and lykewise made request that the matter might remayne and be used as it of longe tyme hath bene.

And shewed causes whi, that is when the merchaunts delyvereth out their clothes to be drest, the workeman takyth the charge of the clothes for the saffe delyvery of them ageyne.

Another cause: yf the rower that shall worke his clothes shall com to the merchaunt he maye undermynde the sheremen and cause the merchaunt to put his worke to other. Whereupon by the mouthe of M^r^ Secondarye all the psons aforenamed had commandement to departe lovyngly and frendly together . . . and that hereafter when the worshipfull aldermen and other of the Assistants shalbe here present the matter to be further talked of, and then yf just occasion shall serve, further ado thereon to be taken.

NOVEMBER 25, 1567. See p. 116.

NOVEMBER 29, 1567. This day the whole companye of the handycraftes men were warned to be here accordyng to the order taken the last co^r^te day, and these Artycles followynge were red unto them, and they all with one voyce consented to every of the saide artycles, and made humble request with wyllyng hertes as they professed that these said orders may be forthwith put yn execution with dylygence, affirmyng the same orders to be profytable to them all.

Item that there shalbe eight or x psons elected and chosen by the wardeyns and assistants to have the viewe of all the merchaunts' clothes hereafter to be wrought within the company, and that no person of this company to folde tak or press or to delyver to the owner any merchaunt's clothe before the same clothe be viewed and seen by two

of the said psons so appoynted. And the said clothes so by them seen and found truely wrought, that is to saye rowed, barbed, first-coursed and shorne from the one end to the other accordyng to the statute last made, they to sett the common seale of the house to every suche clothe yn token of true workemanshipp doon upon the same. And evry suche clothe as shalbe by the saide serchers or any of them found fautye in workemanshipp, or that shalbe folded, takked, pressed, or delyvered to the owner before yt be viewed and sealed yn forme aforesaide, evry workeman of suche clothe or clothes to paye for a fyne of evry suche clothe xx^{s}. . . .

The names of those psons which freely offered themselves to travayle and take paynes to see the saide orders duely put yn execution without anything takynge for their paynes [fifty names].

October, 1568. See p. 118.

June 13, 1575. See p. 123.

October 1, 1577. See p. 121.

November 5, 1577. See p. 118.

April 19, 1591. See p. 121.

October 7, 1591. See p. 123.

December 6, 1591. This daye also att the earnest sute and request and upon the full agreement of those of the assistants and lyverye of the Companye being of the handecrafte, the Wardens of the yomanry, their assistants and xxiiij more of the saide yeomanry, it was by this Courte fullie ordered and agreed that there shalbe fower of the saide yomanrye appointed to be seallers to seal all such woollen cloth as the merchaunts or anye of them shall appoint and deliver to anie of this companye to be dressed to the intente to be transported over sea, &c., . . . and that every clothworker shall send for the sealers when his cloth is ready.

January 16, 1610–11. The humble suit of your worshippes servants of the yeomanry.

First, wee entreat your worshippe that the upper warden of the yeomanryes accompt may be yearly audited according to an old custom carefully provided for by your worshipps predecessors, (that is to say) by two from your worshipps Courte of Assistants and two of our Ancients of the yeomanry.

Secondly, wee humbly intreate your worshippe that the remaynder of the quarterage, your worshippes officers being paid, may remayne in the yeomanrys chest accordynge to an old custome, our wor^{ll} Master of this Company for the tyme beinge to keepe one key, the upper wardens of the yeomanry to keepe another key, and one of the Ancients of the Assistants of the Yeomanry to keepe the third key.

Thirdly, wee desire of yo^{r} wor^{pp} that the upper warden of the yeomanry may have one of his Ancients last being in his place to sit by him and assist him in his accompts and to show him wherein the Company is wronged.

Fourthly, wee desire that when wee shall fynde our officer of the yeomanry to be slacke and remisse in doinge of his duty in his service which he oughte to doe for the good of the Company, and the same duely proved against him, that wee of the yeomanry may have full authority to dismisse him at our owne discretion, but not without the consent of the Master and Wardens and Assistants of this Company for the tyme being first had and obtayned in that behalf.

These Petitions and requests of the yeomanry were graunted and agreed uppon by the Master, Wardens and Assistants present at the said courte holden the saide sixteenth day of January 1610 aforesaid.

MARCH 8, 1612–13. See p. 124.

DECEMBER 17, 1614. See p. 201.

DECEMBER 20, 1614. See p. 202.

JANUARY 27, 1616–17. See p. 125.

NOVEMBER 22, 1620. This day also M^r^ Freeman, M^r^ of this Company, did relate to the Court a great abuse offered unto him by William Caswell a brother of this Company, namelie that where the saide M^r^ F being one of the Committees appoynted by the L^d^ Mayor and Aldermen for further consideration to be had of taken of some branches of the acte of Common Council late made for restrayning of Clothworkers from buying any wollen clothes in Blackwell Hall, and from keepinge anie wollen clothes in their houses to be sold. And at a Committee Court holden the xviii^th^ day of this instant moneth att Guildhall an objection was made by those that stand for the acte, that the Artisan Clothworkers themselves by a writing under their handes had shewed and testified their good liking and approbation of the said act. The said M^r^ Freeman did answere that howsoever some of the said Artisan Clothworkers not knowing what they did when they set their hands to that writing, and standing at the devotion of the drapers for labour without the which they could not maintain their charge, weare drawen to subscribe, yet he well knewe that some of the chiefest of those that had subscribed were abashed att that they done, and M^r^ Amys by name was verrie sorrie that he had been drawen to sett his hand thereunto and repented it as much as anie thinge that ever he did, whereupon the said William Caswell instantlie replied in the hearing of divers personnes that there was not a word true that the said M^r^ Freeman had spoken, for which wordes soe disgracefully uttered the said William Caswell att this Court being called into question did utterlie denie the speakinge of the said wordes. . . .

JUNE 13, 1627. Whereas . . . Suite was commenced in Court of Kings Bench at Westminster by the wardens of yomanry in the name of master and wardens against divers Merchaunt Adventurers upon viii Elizabeth, which yet dependeth in the said courte undetermined. And the said wardens of Yeomanry considering that the proceedings in like suites formerly commenced have been stopped by some speciall commande of the King and State upon the sollicitation of the said

Merchant Adventurers being stronge in purse and frendes, have bethought themselves of a waie or meane to prevente the said Merchaunt Adventurers from the like—and to that purpose have dealte with a Gentleman named Mr. George Kirke of the Kings Ma^tie Bedchamber very gracious with his Ma^tie, who for a fourth part of this Moiety of all penalties, forfeitures which shalbe obtained or gotten upon anie recovery to be had againste any the said Merchant Adventurers upon any action or suite brought or to be brought, sued, commenced, etc.—hath undertaken to doe his beste and to use all the creditt and meanes he can to his Ma^tie that theare bee no stoppe or staie in course of lawe for the sollicitation or procurement of the said Merchant Adventurers in suits already brought or to be brought.

[The Wardens of Yeomanry ask that the Court may record the agreement.]

JULY 10, 1639. This day a question arising in Court concerning the true scope and meaning of the ordinance for payment of admission money, whether it be thereby intended that the same should be paid by all men that are made free of this Companie being by this trade Mercers, Silkmen, Grocers, Hosiers, etc., or else by the Artisan Clothworkers onelie. The Court upon hearing the said ordenance read and takinge due consideration of the scope and intent thereof, have concluded and determined that it is onelie meant and intended by the said ordenance that the said admission money should be paid by the Artisan Clothworkers onelie and by none other using anie other trade or profession.

For extracts of a later date see pp. 198–9, 206.

II

CLASSIFICATION OF WOOLGROWERS AND CLOTHIERS, 1615.

[Extracts from a document in State Papers Domestic, James I, Vol. LXXX, 13, year 1615, entitled *Reasons to prove the convenience of buying and selling of wool.* Most of the remainder of this document is quoted on pp. 188–9 of this book.]

The breeders of woolle in all countries are of three sorts.

1. First those that are men of great estate, having both grounds and stocke of their own and are beforehand in welth. Theis cann afford to delay the selling of their woolls and to stay the clothiers leesure for the payment to increase the price. The number of theis is small.

2. Those that doe rent the King's noblemen's and gent's grounds and deale as largely as either their stocke or creditt will afford. Theis are many and breed great store of wooll ; most of them doe usually either

sell their woolls beforehand, or promise the refusal of them for money which they borrow att the spring of the yeare to buy them sheep to breed the woole, they then having need of money to pay their Lady-day rent and to dubble their stocke upon the grounde as the spring time requireth, and at that tyme the Clothiers disburse their stocke in yarns to lay up in store against hay time and harvest when their spyning fails. Soe that theis farmers and the clothiers have greatest want of money at one time.

3. The generall number of husbandmen in all the woolle countries that have smale livings, whereof every one usually hath some woolle though not much. Theis are many in number in all Countries and have great store of woolle though in smalle parcells. Many of theis also doe borrow money of the wooll merchant to buye sheep to stocke their comons. Their parcells being so small, the tymes of selling soe divers, the distance of place so great between the Clothier and them, it would be their undoing to stay the clothiers leisure for the tyme of their sale or to be subject to him for the price. . . .

Theis woolls are usually converted by fower sorts of people.

1. The riche clothier that buyeth his woolls of the grower in the woolle countries, and makes his whole years provision beforehand, and layes it up in stowre, and in the winter tyme hath it spunne by his owne spinsters and woven by his owne weavers and fulled by his owne tuckers, and all at the lowest rate for wages. Theis clothiers could well spare the woolle buyers that they might likewise have woolle at their owne prizes and the rather because many of them be Brogging clothiers and sell againe very much if not the most of the woolle they buye.

2. The second is the meaner clothier that seldome or never travells into the woolle country to buy his woolle, but borrowes the most parte of it att the markett, and setts many poore on worke, clothes it presently, and sells his cloath in some countries upon the bare thred as in Devonshire and Yorkshire, and others dresse it and sell it in London for ready money, and then comes to the woolle market and payes th' old debte and borrowes more. Of this sort there are great store, that live well and growe riche and sett thousands on woorke; they cannot misse the woolle chapman, for if they doe they must presently put off all their worke folks and become servants to the riche clothier for 4*d.* or 6*d.* a daye which is a poore living.

3. The third sorte are such clothiers that have not stocke enough to bestowe, some in woolle and some in yarne, and to forbeare some in cloth as the rich clothiers doe, and they buy butt little or no woolle but doe weekely buy their yarn in the marketts, and presently make it into cloth and sell it for ready money and so buy yarn again, which yarn is weekly brought into the markett by a great number of poore people that will not spin to the clothier for smale wages; but have stock enough to sett themselves on woorke and doe weekly buy their

woolle in the market by very small parcells according to their use and weekely returne it in yarne, and make good proffit thereof, having the benefit both of their labour and of the merchandise, and live exceeding well. Theis yarn-makers are soe many in number that it is supposed by men of judgement that more than half the cloathes that is made in Wilts, Gloucester and Somersettshire is made by the means of theis yarn makers and poore clothiers that depend weekely upon the woolle chapmen which serves them weekely with woolles either for money or credit.

4. The fourth sorte is of them of the new drapery which are thousands of poore people inhabiting neare the ports and costs from Yarmouth to Plymouth and in many great cities and townes, as London, Norwich, Colchester, Canterbury, South^{ton}, Exter, and many others. These people by theire great industry and skill doe spend a great parte of the course woolls growing in the kingdom, and that att as high a price or higher than the clothiers doe the finest woolls of this countrye as appeareth by a particular hereunto annexed.

III

CHARLES I AND THE PIN MONOPOLY.

[Extract from the Privy Council Register, Vol. XVII, Pt. I. 18 March, 1640.]

The heads of the Trepartite Indenture between his Mat^{ie}, Lawrence Halsted and James Lydsey.

A recitall of the indenture of contract between his Ma^{tie} and the Company of Pinmakers the effect whereof is :—

That his Mat^{ie} to enhable the Pinmakers to live by theire trade by a constand weekely takeing off their Pinns did upon theire petition Covenant with them to furnish a stock of tenne thousand pounds, to bee deposited in the hands of an agent and to bee employed for the buying off and selling of Pinns here and in forraine parts, according to weekely quantities to bee agreed on by them and the Kings Agent att the prices expressed in a schedule.

And the King to provide the companie of a Hall or place of meeting in London.

And to furnish them with merchantable wyre to be delivered att theire Hall att viij^{lb} per cent and for noe greater price.

That the King or his Agent will take off weekely att their Hall such merchantable pinns as by the sayd Agent and Pinmakers shalbee agreed on and att the rates in the Schedule.

And to make payment weekely out of the stocke of 10000^{lb} for Home and forraine vent soe farr as that stocke will extend.

The Pinmakers' Covenant with the King.

That they will buy and take off from the King or his Agent all such merchantable Lattin Wyre as they shall use in makeinge of Pinns, and to pay viii^{lb} per cent for readie money.

And that they shall make Pinns of noe other Wyre. And will make no Pinns of Iron wyre, but such black pinns as shalbee appointed them by the Kings Agent.

That they will make soe many Merchantable pinns as will serve the Kingdom and for forraine vent, and deliver the same att their Hall att the rates in the Schedule.

M^{r} Lidsey's Covenant with the King.

A recitall of the Proclamation against the Importation of Lattin Wyre, and that James Lidsey, a farmer of the Battry works, hath undertaken to furnish the Kingdom with Lattin wyre made in England att moderate rates, and to make good his Mat^{ys} customes according to a medium of the last 7 yeares. But if it shall happen that anie Lattin Wyre shalbee imported and seized to his Mat^{ys} use, then James Lidsey shalbee allowed by his Mat^{ie} and his agent 10*s.* upon every hundred weight so seized.

He Covenants to furnish the Kingdom with good and merchantable Wyre, and to deliver it in London to the Kings Agent att moderate price not exceeding vi^{lb} x xii^{s} the hundred.

That he will sell all to the King or his Agent.

The King's Covenant with James Lidsey.

To buy and take off yearly from him for 10 yeares soe much merchantable Lattine Wyre as shalbe necessary for the use and expence of the Kingdom. And to pay in ready money upon the delivery of the Wyre in London or within one moneth after vi^{lb} xii^{s} per centum.

M^{r} Halsted's covenant with his Mat^{ie}.

The King makes M^{r} Halsted his Agent for 10 yeares for the performing all matters which on his Mat^{s} part are to bee performed either to the Corporation of Pinmakers or to the said James Lidsey, and to take care and see that the said Pinmakers and Lidsey doe performe their Covenants to his Mat^{ie}.

Lawrence Halsted covenants with his Mat^{ie} to provide a stock of 10000^{lb} to bee imployed for 10 yeares for the buying off and selling in this Kingdom and in foraine pts all such marchantable Pinns as shalbe made by the Pinmakers.

And will take them off weekely att the prices in the Schedule.

And will provide the Pinn makers of a Hall or place of meeting in London.

And furnish them of Latin Wyre att moderate rates not exceeding viii^{lb} per cent.

And to others that imploy the sayd wyre for other purposes then making of Pinns not above 7 per cent. And for that which shall bee transported not above vi^{lb} xii^{s} per cent. That M^{r} Halsted will weekely take off their Pinns and pay weekely for them. And will discharge his Mat^{ie} of all his covenants with the Pinmakers as with M^{r} Lidsey.

That M^{r} Halsted will pay 1000 per annum to his Mat^{ies} Exchequer att or 40 daies after.

The first payment to begin from Midsomer.

A recitall that the Pin business hath been managed by James Lidsey in furnishing the Pinners with wyer and buying of their Pinns weekely.

And that the Course hath of late for divers monethes been intermitted.

And that it hath appeared to his Mat^{ie} that in the managinge of the business for the benefitt and support of the Corporation of Pinmakers much loss hath hapened to James Lidsey by imployment of his stock that way, which loss amounteth to 7000^{lb} or thereabouts as appeareth by an Accompt taken by M^{r} Auditor Phelipps. Which said 7000^{lb} (with interest for the same) from henceforth his Mat^{ie} is pleased shalbe paid to James Lidsey out of the cleere profitts that shall hereafter yearely arise to his Mat^{ie} out of this business.

And the King Covenants that Lawrence Halsted shall have viij^{lb} per cent. for his stock. And shalbee allowed (for house rent, wages of officers and servants meet and necessarie to bee imployed about the premises, and other incident charges) such summes as upon accompt by oath in Exchequer shall appeare to have been necessarily defrayed and bee allowed of by the Lord Trea^{r}. and Under Trea^{r}.

That M^{r} Halsted out of the profitts shall pay the 7000^{lb} to James Lidsey with the interest, as the profitts shall yearely arise above 1000 per annum to the King and above the interest of the Stocke and the house rent, wages and other incident charges.

That the cleere profitts (after James Lidsey shalbee paid and the interest of the Stocke and the house rent and wages) are to come to his Mat^{ie} att the ten yeares end.

And then the King is to pay M^{r} Halsted his stock with interest then due, and then his Mat^{ie} to have the whole proceed and effects of the sayd stock then remaineing in the hands and charge of Lawrence Halsted.

The King Covenants that M^{r} Halsted shall take out of the cleere profitts by defalcation 8 per cent. for his Stocke. And for house rent, wages, &c. *ut supra.* And that Lawrence Halsted out of the surplusage of the cleere profitts is to pay M^{r} Lidsey yearely till his sums bee paid with interest for the same.

The Lord Trea^r. is to give allowance to Lawrence Halstead upon his Accompt of these payments. M^r Halsted is to accompt in Michas and Easter termes or one of them yearely. And that after 2000 per annum to his Mat^ie, and 8 per cent. for the stocks interest, and the house rent and wages and James Lidseys 7000^lb and interest satisfied, M^r Halsted will pay into the Exchequer upon his Accompts all pfitts yearely ariseing above.

The King covenants att the end of the 10 yeares to pay Lawrence Halsted his stocke of 10000, and he covenants then to deliver upp to his Ma^tie the proceed and effects of the stocke over and above the payments afore mentioned.

It is declared by his Mat^ie in this indenture and agreed unto by Lawrence Halsted in 7000^lb or thereabouts upon the said Pinn and Wyre business. Now James Lidsey doth hereby grant and assigne to Lawrence Halsted the said 7000 with the interest thereof herein before appointed by his Ma^tie to James Lidsey for or towards the satisfaction of the sayd debt of Lidseys to Lawrence Halsted. And that Lawrence Halsted may assign debts that grow upon contracts for Wyre Pinn business to his Mat^ie and the proceed thereof.

Power to Lawrence Halsted with an officer to search Shipps, Shopps, houses, &c. for Lattin Wyre imported contrary to his Mat^ie Proclamation. And to seize the same to his Mat^ie use according to the Proclamation, Hee accompting for these seizures to his Mat^ie all charges deducted.

That his Mat^ie will give M^r Halsted and James Lidsey all favour and assistance as well for restraint of importation of hatten Wyre, as for the accomplishment of all other the premises.

To express in the Booke.

That albeit exception might bee taken to the Accompt sett for that it appeareth by oath and otherwise by the Auditors certificett yt there hath bene disbursed aboute the sume of 7000^lb. And a great part thereof upon his Ma^tie pleasure and direction signified to the sayd Lawrence Halsted to disburse such moneys as should bee necessary in the said business, Therefore his Mat^ie is pleased to give allowance of the sayd Accompt and that the said sume of 7000^lb with the interest from hence to incurr shall bee answered to the said James Lidsey.

That there may be inserted a declaration in this Booke by his Mat^ie.

That whereas the Pinn makers are by theire covenant with the King to pay viij per cent. for wyre, and the prices of their Pinns mencioned in the Schedule is apportioned accordingly,

That in case M^r Halsted shall sell their wyer under the rate of 8 per cent, That then they may abate of the prices in the schedule proportionablie to such abatement in the price of Wyre.

And it is further to be provided for in this Booke. That in case Lawrence Halsted shall not within the sayd 10 years raise and receive

out of the cleere profitts of the stocke and agency the sayd sume of 7000lb assigned him as aforesaid with interest for the sumes,

That then the said Lawrence Halsted (upon the same points, covenants and provisions aforesaid) for so many yeares more and untill he and they out of the sayd profitts shall have raised and bee paid the said sume of 7000lb with the interest thereof.

All which articles agreed on by the Lord Treasr. and the Lord Cottington with the assistance of his Maties Attorney General, were this day ratified and confirmed by his Matie and the Board, and ordered to bee passed unto indentures and putt in execution.

IV

THE FELTMAKERS' JOINT-STOCK PROJECT, Cotton MSS. Titus B.v. 117 (*circa* 1611).

The state of the Feltmakers' Case with some propositions on their part to remedy the mischiefs they now are constrayned to endure.

The Feltmakers were by decres in Star Chamber unyted to the Company of the Haberdashers London, and did sit with them in their hall for government of the trade till they, fynding themselves rather oppressed by them than any way cherished or abuses reformed, thereupon by sute obtayned a Charter from his Matye by which they were incorporated a body of themselves by the name of Master, Wardens and Commonalty of the art and mysterye of Feltmakers of London and 4 miles compasse.

Hereupon by allowance of the Ld Mayor they published their Charter, tooke them a Hall, and accordingly did doe and governe their Company. Afterwards considering that they were a trade and company of themselves by whome many thousands doe lyve besides their Company, namely the hatt trymmers, hat band makers, hatt dyers and hat sellers which are the haberdashers, and yet neverthelesse they were extremely kept under by the haberdashers ingrossing the Commodetye of woolls brought in merely for their trade of hatmaking and for noe other use, and by that meanes haveing both the meanes of the felt makers trade (for woolls) and the meanes of their maintenance (for buyeing their wares being made) all in their power, by which the feltmakers in generall (except some fewe in particular) doe fynd themselves much wronged, and by meanes of yt and their daily threates did feare the overthrowe of their trade: whereuppon the generallitye petitioning to the Company of the hard case they lived in notwithstanding theer extreme sore labour, besought them to provide some meanes for theire releife and prevention of what might ensue. The Company then by means made them a stock to buy the wools ymported

for the Company at the best hand: but being opposed by the haberdashers, the pryses by that meanes were enhaunsed, and yet the salle of their wares made, kept in bondage as before, whereby many of their trade have been impoverished, many forced to leave their trade, and many to forsake the Cittye, by which meanes all that nowe live of feltmaking as pickers, carders, trymmers, bandmakers, dyers and hatsellers are much hindred, the trade being drawn into the country.

Hereupon the company became (as often before) humble sutors for theire freedom, which by opposition of the Company of Haberdashers and theire false suggestions to the Court, they could not obtayne—howbeit a Committee of Aldermen have certified it to be fytt—neither are suffered to have liberty to search for the abuses of theire trade under warrant from the Lord Mayor, which formerly they have often done; besydes their shoppes threatened to be shut upp notwithstanding their inhabitance of the Citye many yeares.

Nowe the Company seeing the extreame mallice of the haberdashers, and that the salle of their wares lyeth soly in them, whereby many are forced to hawke their hatts made contrary to the Statutes, and sell at farr lesse rates than they can truly afford them, only to buy Victual, whereby if some redresse be not had many will be undonn or forced to goe into the countrye, to the great damage of the trade in genrall and overthrowe of the Corporation which they much desire to support: They have considered to rayse them a stocke to take in all men's wares when they be made, to avoyd hawkeing and to encourage men to follow their trade and continue within the corporation: for the benefit of all partyes: The Citye, the trade and Company and all that trymme and sell hatts and live by that trade, without desire of enhaunsing the pryce of anything or dammage to any man.

The Stock they purpose to be 25000^{li} to be resident in some convenient place of the subburbs, where men may take notice to have mony for their wares if they will bring them, being made good and at such rates as they may well be afforded: by judgement of sworn men of the trade who shall rate them both inward and outward so as the poore shall sell much better then they have donn the other sort, howbeit they sell cheaper by ij^{s} in the pound then for the most part they have donn: yet haveing a certen markett and ready money to buy wooll agayne, and in that then they shalbe in no hazard of losse by trusting as nowe they doe their gayne will be much more.

1. The Corporation will flourish.

2. Felts will be better made in that evry man shall have pryce for his ware as his workmanship is.

3. The trade being much used in the Countrye will revert into the Cittye to the benefyt of the Cittye and all that live by the trade.

4. The haberdasher shall by good wares more genrally than nowe and at as cheape rates as he now usually buyeth (the times of the yeare

and pryces of wool considered) and be sorted with much more ease and content then nowe he is.

5. The Haberdasher of mean estate shalbe in much better case than nowe for that evry man shall have good wares without culling according to their sorts.

6. The Commonwealth shalbe better served in that nowe they shall have good wares for their mony.

7. The stock cannot but be gainful to the stockers in that the hatts according to their goodnes shall come in at ij^{s} in the pound profitt upon the salle, mearely out of the feltmaker's labour: whoe is equally benifitted by the certen stock: besides the often retorne of the stock at 2^{s} in the pound cannot but geve content to the stockers.

8. The stock shall be sufficiently secured were it never so much, in that they shall deliver noe mony without a sufficient value of ware: theer salle wilbe certen in that without buying the haberdashers cannot uphold their trade: besydes no man shall have benefitt of the stock except he will bring all the ware he makes to it (except it be a hat or two specially made and that with the privilege of the stockers), besydes if at any tyme the stock shalbe full of ware and want money, the Company by a genrall consent can forbeare bringing in or slack their making for a tyme. But so it is that once in a year all felts will off, of what nature soever.

9. The wares being of necessitye to be bought, the Stockers need not trust except they will but upon good securitye, which will make men more wary in buying.

V

'THE CASE OF THE FELTMAKERS TRUELY STATED.'

[Extracted from a report of a committee of the Court of Aldermen recommending that the feltmakers should be admitted one of the city companies, which report was adopted. *Repertories*, lx. f. 193. July 23, 1650.]

(1) As to matter of convenience or inconvenience: By their admittance all the Feltmakers within foure miles compasse must be subjugated under the authority of the City . . . beare an equall chardge in all taxes and sources as a Companye and have a necessary dependence thereon in point of trade as well as regulation, whereas on the contrary if not admitted they must of necessity be loose without rule or else must exert a Government without the Cittie in such place as shall be most suitable to their own interest; which if effected must be a great prejudice to the Cittie and all of the Free Feltmakers that are members thereof.

(2) If admitted, not onely the trade of Feltmaker but the Habd[rs] trade wilbe advanced alsoe, the incorporatinge the Feltmakers together being an effectual meanes to prevent their scattering as formerly into severall partes of the Kingdom, which hath occasioned the making great quantitys of deceiptfull hatts wherewith chapmen in the Country have been supplied, and the Habd[rs] trade as well as the Feltmakers of London thereby impeded, also it will greatly further the forraigne trade, the greatest parte of the material, without which good hatts cannot be made, being commodities imported by which the nation gaines much custom and excise and the indigent much advantage, all which, if they be necessitated to desperse or if for want of Government the Trade, as it must doe, shall growe to decay, must fall to the ground ; alsoe besides the losse and discouragement of soe many thousand labourious persons by whose industry not only themselves are mainteyned but the cittie and Commonwealth advantaged.

(3) If admitted, by a due execution of such good lawes as have been made for the punishment of offenders, the genrall fraud that hath been used in making and vending of hats will be prevented, whereas on the contrary if not admitted, the forrainers cannot regulate the freemen nor the freemen the forrainers, being divided in interest, and soe frauds will increase, and the Habd[r], if hee had power, hath not the skill to prevent it.

(4) If admitted, a great number of poore persons in the sevrall parishes where they live will be imployed, many of the said trade imploying 10 to 30 persons and upwards in picking and carding of wool and preparing it for use, besides Journeymen and apprentices. Alsoe the Arte itself by regulations wilbe improved ; all servants being thereby under a tye of subjection whereby they wilbe bettered in their skill and abilitie to make hatts, the want whereof hath occasioned the making of soe many deceiptful hatts as hath been hitherto ; all masters being by this meanes tyed to give an account of their true service seven years, whereby the common mischief of compounding for time, setting upp within time, marriing during their apprenticeshipps wilbe prevented.

(5) If admitted, the great mischiefe continually occasioned by the Haberdasher in bespeaking slight, ill-wroate hatts of unskillfull persons with which he furnisheth the merchant to the great disparagement of the trade abroad and at home wilbe prevented, it being a common course with the haberdashers to undertake to furnish the marchant with hatts at such and such rates, and then cause such slight and ill wroate hatts to be made as cannot be serviceable, whereby the buyer is so frauded, the haberdasher many times getting most by bad hatts, so that it is not to be expected that hee should finde out or punish a fault of his own appointment and wherein his owne profitt is soe much concerned ; besides had he power and will he wanteth abilitie, for unless he have Judgement in the stuff unwroate (which none but the Feltmaker

hath) hee can never finde out or prevent the fraud or know wherein a hatt is unserviceable.

As to inconveniences objected.

(1) That if the Feltmakers be admitted, the Company of Habd^{rs} are destroyed.

Answer. Our admittance as feltmakers cann noe way destroy the Company of Habd^{rs}, there being but aboute fortie Master Feltmakers free of the Haberdashers Company, which if taken off from them (being as they affirme poore and inconsiderable persons) could be noe great prejudice but on the contrary an ease and in probabilitie affreeing them from a chardge, but not being taken of from them nor descreing it unless the Habd^{rs} please, we cannot conceive wherein they cann be prejudiced, much less destroyed, for not withstanding their admittance as Feltmakers they must, if able men, contribute as members of the Haberd^{rs}, and if poore men, the Company of Feltmakers must yield them releife as members of their Company as well as the Haberdashers. And as for the loss of bynding our Apprentices which is all the reall cause of complaint they have, that is a business soe inconsiderable, that it is not fitt to be named in the same day or once to be put in the balance with the conveniences before mentioned, for by the Statute no freeman can bind above two apprentices in seven years, which being computed among the fortie masters now free of the said Company if they should all keepe apprentices, the number found annually would not amount to above 12 or 14 at the most, soe that the prejudice is altogether inconsiderable especially considering that what they now strive for may bee taken from them some other legall way, should the feltmakers designe the cutting of themselves from the Habd^{rs}.

(2) That the Government of the Feltmakers is wholly in the hands of the Habd^{rs}.

Answer. The Habd^{rs} never had any power by Act of Parliament to govern the Feltmakers otherwise than to search and view their ware, neither can they by their charter pretend to any right to govern them, the word feltmaker being not so much as mentioned in their charter, neither had they any pretext of power over them, untill the feltmakers that were forraigners as well as freemen by consent (before they had a charter of their owne) agreed and did sitt with the Habd^{rs} to assist in the regulation of their trade. But if any suite happened the charge was borne only by the Feltmakers. But for any power on them, the Habd^{rs} never had any, neither had they obtained soe many feltmakers to be free of their company had they not bound apprentices and after three years service sold them into the country. By which means the number of their members were encreased and much bad ware made, thereby occasioning destruction to the trade, for prevention whereof the Feltmakers were necessitated to procure theire charter, which they needed not have done could the Haberdashers have governed them or had they such right of government as is now pretended. As for their

Jurisdiction on their members they may still exercise it for their power of search on others not their members. If they make it appeare the company of Feltmakers wilbe soe far from hindringe that they will assist them. But for any other right in our government wee conceive that by the same rule that the Habd[rs] challenge the Government of all the feltmakers because some feltmakers are free of their Company. They may alsoe challenge jurisdiction on all the Goldsmiths, Drapers, &c., because some drapers and goldsmiths are free of their Company. But we submitt and leave these things to the judgement of this honb[le] committee.

To conclude, the exercise of the power given us by our Charter cannot hinder the Habd[rs] from the exercise of the power given by theirs, but if both have a power given which they may execute for prevention of fraudes and abuse in Trade, wee could wish that the Habd[rs] would cease to hinder us, and with dilligence pursue the worke to which they pretend they are impowered, least by their perverse opposition of us and neglect of their owne acknowledged duty, the Commonwealth bee further prejudiced in the destruction of a Trade which in itself is commodious and of greate use to the nation.

VI

EXTRACTS FROM FELTMAKERS' ORDINANCES AND COURT BOOK, MAINLY ILLUSTRATING THE DISPUTE OF 1696–9.

[The new Charter was dated June 27, 1667.]

Bolton Mayor.

Martis octavo die. Octobris, 1667.

This day M[r] Alderman Starling, Sir George Waterman, and Sir W. Hooker K[t] and Alderman, the Committee formerly appointed to consider the matters conteyned in the petition of the Journeymen Feltmakers, Freemen of this city, against the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the Feltmakers' Company, recommend the following articles [articles 1–5 abridged]:—

1. No Member or Brother to employ a foreigner except such as shall be admitted to the Company. [Penalty £5 a week.]

2. Whereas great numbers of foreigners are admitted on producing their certificates of apprenticeship—their intent being to set up afterwards in the country—such foreigners shall be required to pay £20 on entering. But if the Court of L[d] Mayor and Aldermen direct the admission of a foreigner, he shall only pay 20*s*.

3. Journeymen not to leave masters at pleasure, but to give a month's notice; such notice not to be given till after a month's stay with the master.

4. Masters to give the same notice.

5. Journeymen spoiling work are to make good the damage, which is to be assessed between master and journeyman, or by two Masters, one chosen by each.

6. And that the said Journeymen may not by combination or otherwise excessively at their pleasure raise their wages, to the abuse, not only of the said Master-workmen, but also of all other His Majesties Subjects, Be it ordeyned and established that hence forth yearly, videlicet in September, the Master and Wardens shall present to the Court of Lord Mayor and Aldermen a table of rates, and none shall take or give more on pain of £5: and the wages for the ensueing year to be accompted from Michelmas next shall be as follows:—

For a hatt the price being 14*s.* (the Master giving unto the Journeyman good and wholesome Dyett), the Master shall pay unto him for making such a Hatt 21*d.* in money and finde unto the Journeyman house roome and all manner of tooles and fireing and other things appertayning to the makeing of such a hatt. A hatt of the same price, the Journeyman findeing himself in meate and drinke, the Master shall pay two shillings and nynepence and finde unto the Journeyman house roome and all manner of tooles and fireing as aforesaid.

For a hatt of the price of 14*s.*, to 24*s.* 2*s.* 3*d.* with dyett, 3*s.* 3*d.* without.
„ Beaver „ 2*s.* 9*d.* „ 3*s.* 9*d.* „

Fines, paines, and forfeitures to be recovered in the Court of Records.

[The above is inserted in the By-laws of the Company.]

Pease Mayor.

JULY 7, 1668. Master and Wardens of the Feltmakers appearing upon the Complaints of the Journeymen that they have neglected to get the Ordinances confirmed . . . did here declare their readiness and desire to get the said Ordinances confirmed by the Judges according to the Statutes, and that the only hindrance was the want of money to defray the said charge.

Whereupon the Journeymen now present offer to give 2*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* apiece towards that object.

Ordered that the Masters make a liberal subscription as an example.

Selected Ordinances relating to Masters, Journeymen, and Apprentices. [Abridged.]

No master to take an alien or stranger to be an apprentice or journeyman;

nor to have above two apprentices at once;

nor to set to work another man's apprentice;

nor to entice another's apprentice;

nor to admit to work any person without a certificate, from a master or proof of his being a freeman;

None to sett up or take an apprentice till he has served a journeyman 3 years and attended Master, Wardens and Assistants and made 3 proof pieces and signed the book; and such persons not to take more than 1 apprentice for three years more.

Care is to be taken that upon the complaint of a journeyman of his being out of work, the Master, Wardens and Assistants or any three shall order him to be sett on worke and employed as journeyman with some member.

No member to permit any man's apprentice to 'bow and basin' without leave of his master.

No member to weigh stuff to a piece master. [Fine £5.]

No member to take stuff to make hats as a piece master.

No member to 'doe off' any foreign hatts [Fine 1s.] (not to extend to dressing and basining).

No singeing boy to be employed as such above the age of 18 years, When those years are expired he is to be bound apprentice if the master have not full number, or if he have, to some other member, or dismissed.

Complaints of masters and servants against each other to be heard before the court. [Refusal fined 20s.]

No apprentice to marry. [Fine £5.]

None to hawk hatts.

Clerk to give under his hand with the Company's seal a certificate for any member going to work in the country.

Extracts from Feltmakers' Court Book.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1678. A. H. came to this court and alleged that D. H. his master refused to give him a months warning, whereupon he was fined 30s. in accordance with byelaws.

NOVEMBER 15, 1680. Upon the reading of the petition of the journeymen against the number of sing[e]ing boyes, It was ordered that for the future noe person shall have at at one tyme above one singing boy. . . .

MAY 14, 1680–1. Ordered that upon the debate of the information against [3 names] . . . this company will stand by all such as shall keepe one singing boy at one tyme according to the orders of this Company.

JUNE 13, 1681. Ordered that the Charter and Ordenances be taken out of the chest in order to the Tryall with the Journeymen.

JULY 18, 1681. Ordered that the refractory journeymen be prosecuted at the charge of the Company upon their refusing to pay their quarterage.

OCTOBER 17, 1681. A Committee to attend on counsell and manage the approaching tryall with the Journeymen.

FEBRUARY 6, 1681–2. Tryall approaching at the Surrey Assizes with journeymen.

MAY 14, 1694. See p. 219.

NOVEMBER 14, 1694. See p. 219.

FEBRUARY 7, 1694–5. Whereas severall antient men who use to work piece work make complaint for want of work unless they be still permitted to work in the same manner, the Master moved this Court that every one of the Assistants would take and employ one if so many wanted employment, and declared he was willing to receive and employ one himself. And Warden H. offered to employ an other And after divers debates—Ordered that the Beadles inquire against all offenders against the Byelaws forbidding piece work and acquaint the next Court thereof.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1695. See p. 220.

FEBRUARY 10, 1696. Free Journeymen complain that divers countrey Journeymen have within these 10 days left the French Hatmakers at Wandsworth, Lambeth and Battersey and work in Southwark. Ordered that they shall be allowed to continue one month only.

NOVEMBER 16, 1696. It is agreed and ordered by this Court that from and after the 21st day of this present month of November until the month of September next comeing, the wages to be given by the Master workmen of the Mistery liveing within the Citty of London and fowre miles compasse of the same to the Journeymen of the trade for makeing of Hats shall be as followeth, (that is to say):—

	s.	*d.*	
A Beaver	3	0	With Dyett.
A Hat of any price from 18*s.* to a Beaver .	2	6	„
A Hat of 16*s.* price	2	4	„
„ 14*s.* „	2	2	„
„ 12*s.* „	1	10	„
„ 10*s.* „	1	6	„
„ 8*s.* or any other price up to 10*s.* .	1	2	„
„ 7*s.* or 6*s.*	1	0	„
„ 5*s.*		9	„

And also that if the Journeymen free of this Company doe not accept of the wages before sett downe and expressed of, and from any Work Master liveing within the limits afores[d], Then and in such case it shall and may be lawfull for all and every Work Master liveing without the freedom of the Citty to employ or sett to work as a Journeyman any person or persons of the Mistery being Natives of this Kingdom, So as such person or persons in that case to be employed make proofe before a Court of Assistants of this Company that he or they have served his or their Apprenticeship of Seaven years in the said Mistery. Upon which proof so made and on payment of the some of Twenty Shillings fine to the use of the Company besides the Clerk and Beadles fees according to antient custome, such person or persons may be admitted a Forreigne Journeyman of Journeymen

of this Company, Any Byelaw or Byelaws Ordinance or Ordinances of this Company to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding. And it is further ordered that none of the Masters or Journeymen of the Mistery doe give or take more than the rates above mentioned upon paine that the party offending shall forfeite for every time he shall be found to act contrary to the true meaning of the above order such sume of Money, not exceeding the sume of 5lb, as a Court of Assistants of this Company shall think fitt to impose on him or them.

NOVEMBER 30, 1696. Geo Burkridge and others to ye number of 12 Journeymen of ye Mistery declare to this Court on behalf of y^{m}selves and all ye Journeymen of ye Trade within ye limits of ye Corporation, That they are come to a resolution among themselves not to accept of any less wages for makeing of hats y^{n} w^{t} they formerly rec^{d} and desire y^{t} ye late Order for lessening theere wages may be set aside.

NOVEMBER 25, 1697. See p. 221.

NOVEMBER 29, 1697. Two Journeymen of the Trade apply to this Court to prefer a petition at the opening of the next Session of Parliament to prevent a Repeale of the Law prohibiting the importation of French Hats towards the charge whereof they were willing to contribute. And further desired that the Committee might be appointed to meet some of the Journeymen to accomodate the matters in difference between the Masters and them touching Piece work. After debate had on the said proposall and desire, the Master informed the said Journeymen, That this Company would on their contribution assist in such a petition as desired. And that as to Piece work this Court could not at present give any Answer, in regard what was done relating thereto was upon the petition of the greatest part of the Masters of the Trade to this Court.

[M^{r} J. Rice and M^{r} Thos Newby being summoned and reproved for working as Piecemasters, said they could not work otherwise. They were offered work and warned.]

JUNE 20, 1698. George Burkeridge, Thomas Newby and one other Journeyman came to this Court on behalfe of themselves and the other Journeymen for the accomodation of the matters in difference between them and the Company, and offered that in order thereto all matters relating to the Trade might stand upon the same foot as in 1682 and all suits touching the sindging boys to be forborne. After long debate thereupon had, the Court acquainted them that if they would give an ingenuous acc^{t} and full discovery of their combinations and collections of money against the Company by Wednesday next they might expect some favour, which the Journeymen promised to comply with.

Resolved that all persons sued for keeping sindging boys shall defend themselves at their own charge.

JUNE 23, 1698. The Master reported to this Court—That the Committee appointed on the 9th instant had considered the matters then to

them referred, And that George Burkeridge and other Journeymen on Tuesday last mett some of the said Committee and renewed theere desire of an accomodation of the matters in diffrence between them and the Company. And in order thereto produced what papers (they alleged) they had of contributions by them made and how the money was expended, And desired that all suits might be forborne and that they might be permitted to make a hat for themselves, and acknowledged they were guilty of combination and would plead so to the indictment and had distributed money to severall not to work but at the prices agreed upon.

Agreed that several of the Journeymen, vizt Suth and so many as the Committee think fitt, be prosecuted for combination, and that the Master give answer to such of the Journeymen that shall apply to him on behalf of themselves and the rest.

AUGUST 1, 1698. Edward Izard, Thomas Newby and John Halsall addressed themselves to this Court, on behalf of themselves and the whole body of the Journeymen of the Trade, for an accomodation of the diffrences between them and the Masters and offered to be unanimous in assisting the Company as formerly, and proposed to abide by the mediation and award of M^r^ Cox and M^r^ Cholmley, the two Members elected and returned to serve as Burgesses for the Burrough of Southwark in the next ensueing Parliament.

AUGUST 5, 1698. Ordered that Daniell Torin, Abraham Torin, Jacob Braun and James Maintzu, being 4 French Feltmakers, be tryed the next Assizes to be holden for the County of Surrey.

The Master reported to this Court that the Committee appointed last Court had mett several Journeymen of the Trade with M^r^ Cox and M^r^ Cholmley in order to accomodate the matters in difference between the Masters and Journeymen, who had then declared their sorrow for theire unlawful combinations to raise their wages and promised to subscribe an Instrument declaring the same, and that they would for the future be obedient to the Bylaws of the Company and discover all such evil practices. And a draught of such Instrument or submission being now read, it is ordered that the same be engrossed with such alteration as the Clerk shall think fitt and be signed by the persons indicted and fifteen more of such of the Journeymen as the Master and Wardens shall direct. And that thereupon the prosecutions against them be stayed.

We whose hands are hereunto subscribed and sett being Journeymen Feltmakers in and about the City of London and Borough of Southwark doe hereby acknowledge :—That we with other Journeymen of the said Trade have held severall meetings wherein we have conspired and combined together to enhance the prices for making of Hats for which severall of us now stand indicted, And being now greatly sensible and fully convinced of the unlawfulness of such conspiracies, Doe hereby

declare our hearty and unfeigned sorrow for the same, And we and every one of us doe hereby promise and agree to and with the Master, Wardens and Commonalty of the Company of Feltmakers London, that neither we nor any of us (nor any other journeyman of the Trade with our or any of our privity and consent) shall or will at any time hereafter doe any act or thing whatsoever that may in any wise tend to the promoting or encouraging of such conspiracies or combinations. But that we and every of us shall and will doe all that in us lyeth to discourage and prevent such conspiracies and combinations for the future, And also will endeavour to raise and collect money among the Journeymen Feltmakers what they shall freely contribute and pay towards prosecuting the French or any other unlawfull workers in the said Trade, And for that purpose shall and will truly pay all such money that shall be raised by such contributions into the hands of the Master of the said Company for the time being. And we doe further promise that we will for the time to come behave and demeane ourselves tractable and conformable to the Government and Byelaws of the said Company.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1698. See p. 223.

NOVEMBER 23, 1698. See p. 221.

DECEMBER 5, 1698. This Court being acquainted that the Journeymen of the Trade who were lately indicted for a Combination to raise theire wages, moved the Court of Kings Bench last Terme for theire Discharge on the Company's Order to forbeare prosecuting them, But that the same was opposed by M^r^ Price whose men had since that Order abruptly left him. In respect whereof the said Court of Kings Bench would not discharge the Journeymen so indicted but ordered they should try the Cause next Assizes. And this Court takeing notice that the Journeymen of the Trade in generall doe notwithstanding their late submission continue their combinations to raise their wages, It is therefore by Vote ordered, That the said M^r^ Price be reimbursed his charges touching the premises, and that the prosecution of the said Indictment be continued and carryed on at the Company's charge in case the Journeymen should refuse to work at the Rates lately settled.

DECEMBER 13, 1698. See p. 223.

DECEMBER 19, 1698. See p. 223.

JANUARY 11, 1698–9. See p. 223.

MARCH 27, 1699. See p. 223.

JULY 3, 1699. The Master reported to this Court that on Tuesday last he attended, with others of the Company, on the Parliament Members for the County of Surrey, according to a Rule of Court made by the Lord Chiefe Justice Holt at the last Assizes at Kingston. And after hearing them and the Defendants and other Journeymen of the Trade, they made an Award and therein made no other alteration of the Rates than 2 *d.* allowance on a Beaver, a penny on a 14 *s.* Hat, and a penny advance on an 8 *s.*, And so to a 10 *s.* Hat, And they

directed the Indictment to be discharged and Bill in Chancery to be dismissed.

Ordered that the Master and Wardens doe attend the said Judge and acquaint his Lordship of what was done by the said Arbitrators, and also to acquaint his Lordship that the Company intend in September next to present a Table of Rates with the aforesaid alterations to the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen for their allowance.

OCTOBER 2, 1699. See p. 223.

VII

THE STATUTE OF APPRENTICES SET ASIDE.

[Extract from the Privy Council Register, Oct. 29, 1669.]

Upon reading this day at the Board the humble Peticon of Frances Kiderby of Framlingham, in the County of Suffolke, Draper, Setting forth That he served his apprenteship for Seaven yeares in the City of London to a Taylor, whereby he came to the knowledge and skill of all sorts of Cloath, and used and exercised the same for a long time, That the Petior's occasions calling him to live in Framlingham aforesaid, and that Towne wanting one that dealt in Cloath, the Petior set up a shop for selling the same, and thereby gott a good livelihood for himself and Family, yet some, out of malice hath caused Three Bills of Indictment to be presented against him at the Sessions held at Woodbridge for that County upon the Statute made 5 Eliz. c. 4, whereby it is provided that none shall use any manuall occupations but he that has been bound Seaven yeares an aprentize to the same, 'which Statute though not repealed yet has been by most of the Judges looked upon as inconvenient to Trade and to the Encrease of Inventions,' That the Petior hath removed the said Indictments into the Court of Kings Bench where Judgment will be given against him, that Statute being still in force and therefore Praying that his Matie will be pleased to give order to his Attorney Generall to enter a *non prosequi* for stopping proceedings against him. It was ordered by his Matie in Councell That it be and it is hereby Referred to Mr Attorney Generall to examine the truth of the Petior's Case, and upon Consideration thereof to Report to his Matie in Councell his opinion thereupon and how far he conceives it may be fitt for his Matie to gratify the Petior in his said Request.

[On Dec. 17, 1669, the Attorney-General reported that Kiderby was liable to the penalty of the Statute, but that, the indictments being in the King's name, His Majesty might order a *non processe* to be entered; which was ordered to be done.]

APPENDIX B

LIST OF MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

FOR THE HISTORY OF THE INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES OF LONDON DURING THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

Note.—This list is very far from being an exhaustive one. The purely trading companies, such as the Grocers, Mercers, Fishmongers, &c., have been entirely omitted ; and so have a number of companies formed to carry on new processes, such as soap, starch, paper, and glass-making, for the history of which there is abundant material in the State Papers and Privy Council Register for the period 1620–40. Even in the case of the companies included it would be impossible in a preliminary survey of this kind to exhaust the wealth of material contained in the State Papers and the MSS. Department of the British Museum. The City of London Repertories, perhaps the richest source of all, have only been directly examined in the case of one company, the Feltmakers. Most of the other references to them are derived from a brief digest contained in the Harleian MSS. 6597, 4. In the case of Remembrancia only the published 'Index' has been consulted.

ABBREVIATIONS.

SPD = State Papers Domestic.
PCR = Privy Council Register.
City Rep. = City of London Repertories.
HMCR = Historical MSS. Commission Report, Appendix.
Remem. = Index to Remembrancia.
BM = British Museum.

Armourers' Company.

1590–2 City Rep. vol. xxii. ff. 163–435. Armourers *v.* Cutlers.
1635 PCR Apr. 3, May 22, June 4. Artisan *v.* Trader.

Bakers' Company.

1526 Brewer's *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, vol. iii. pt. 2, Nos. 1528–9, and vol. iv. pt. 2, Nos. 2749–50. } Municipal corn supply.

Elizabeth:
1579–83 Remem. pp. 373–5.
1580–1 „ pp. 33, 92. White *v.* Brown Bakers.
1581 „ p. 33. Assize of Bread.
1592 „ „ „ „
1594 „ p. 376 „ „
1611 „ p. 95. White *v.* Brown Bakers.
1619 „ p. 386. A Baker's Budget.

1620 Remem. pp. 101–2. White *v.* Brown.
1621 Sign Manual, vol. xii. No. 38. Charter of Brown Bakers.
1624 PCR Apr. 22. Admission of outsiders.

Basketmakers' Company.

1565 City Rep. vol. xv. f. 513. Made a separate company.
„ „ „ xvi. ff. 60, 492 „ „
1594 „ „ xxii. f. 303.

Beavermakers' Company, see *Feltmakers.*

Blacksmiths' Company.

1613 Remem. pp. 217–18. Against a patent for iron rods.

Clockmakers' Company (incorporated 1631).

1622 SPD cxxvii. 15–16. Against aliens and importation.

Clothworkers' Company.

1479 Calendar of Patent Rolls, p. 153, Membrane 28. Shearmen.
1480 „ „ 221, „ 24. Fullers.
1537 to 1700 Court Books of Clothworkers' Company (the Court Books are continuous up to present day), see extracts, pp. 228–34.

Elizabeth:

1566 SPD xli. 49–50
1572 SPD lxxxviii. 24
1575 SPD cvi. 5; cf. Acts of Privy Council, 1576, pp. 73, 106–8, 206
1584 SPD clxxv. 14; cf. Acts of Privy Council, 1588, p. 327
1596 SPD cclxi. 39, 47
1597 SPD cclxv. 74
1599 SPD cclxxi. 3
1600 SPD cclxxiv.

} Against export of unfinished cloth.

James I:

1604 SPD vi. 109
1606 SPD xx. 9–10
1613 Mar. 3, SPD p. 124, and lxxii. 69–70
1614 Dec. 2, SPD p. 261; Proclamation Coll. No. 35
1615 PCR June 7, 19
1616 PCR Jan. 5; Feb. 19, 22; Apr. 9, 26; May 9; Sept. 11, 18, 25, 26
„ SPD lxxxvi. 40, 42, 46; lxxxvii. 57
„ Lansdowne MSS. BM clii. *passim*
„ Cotton MSS. BM Titus Bv 78/244

} Grant to New Merchant Adventurers.

1617 SPD xc. 9, and Proc. Coll. No. 50 A, Aug. 12, Nov. 27, Sign Manual, vol. viii. No. 77; PCR. Restoration of old M. A.
1618 PCR Dec. 20
1619 PCR Oct. 10

} Handicraft *v.* Merchants.

1622 SPD cxxx. 140–3. Clothworkers *v.* Drapers.
„ SPD cxxxiii. 3, 36.
1624 SPD clxxx. 67.
„ Apr. 14, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iii. 34. Handicraft regulations.

Charles I:

1625 SPD xiv. 14–16.
1627 SPD lxxxii. 76.
1628 SPD xcviii. 103.
1633 SPD ccxxxvi. 16; cclvii. 1–6. Search of artisans; against gig mills.

1634 SPD cclxxviii. 104–7
„ SPD cclxxxiii. 38
} Clothworkers *v.* Drapers.

Coopers' Company.

1590 City Rep. vol. xxii. f. 199. Apprenticeship.
1593 Apr. 3, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iii. 8
1621 Mar. 9 „ „ „ iii. 19
} Coopers *v.* Brewers.
1622 SPD cxxvii. 15. Against aliens.

Cordwainers' Company.

1575 Lansdowne MSS. BM xxi. 30.
1576 „ xxii. 39
1578 „ xxvi. 65–6
} English *v.* alien shoemakers.
1580 Remem. pp. 178–9.
1585 SPD clxxvii. 16. Engrossing of leather.
1590 Lansdowne MSS. BM lxiii. 4
„ City Rep. vol. xxii. f. 168
} Difference with Curriers.

Curriers' Company.

1566? SPD xli. 23. Reconstitution of company.
1596 City Rep. vol. xxiii. f. 519.
1604 „ vol. xxvi. 506.
1614 PCR Sept. Curriers *v.* Shoemakers.
[For an attempt to regulate the tanning of leather by a grant of a patent in 1572–7, see Lansdowne MSS. v. 58; xix. 52; xxiv. 70–4; also SPD Eliz. xc. 22; cv. 5; cvi. 55; Acts of Privy Council, Jan. 1575–6 and Jan. 1576–7.]

Cutlers' Company.

1566 SPD xiii. 36
1580 Remem. pp. 580–1
} Westminster *v.* London.
1590–2 City Rep. vol. xxii. ff. 163, 435. Cutlers *v.* Armourers.
1606 „ vol. xxvii. ff. 213, 225, 294. Commonalty *v.* rulers.
„ Remem. p. 93. New charter.
1622 SPD cxxviii. 46–7
1623–4 Remem. pp. 260–1
} Against aliens and importation.

Dyers' Company.

Elizabeth:
1567 Lansdowne MSS. BM ix. 62
1577 „ „ xxiv. 66
} Introduction of craftsmen.
1592 House of Lords MSS. HMCR. iii. 6. Logwood.
James I:
1606–8 Remem. pp. 118–9. Dyeing silk.
1608 SPD xxxix. 42, 62
1614–7 Remem. pp. 120–2
1621 SPD xlii. 49, 56
1622 SPD cxxvii. 114; cxxxiii. 4–9
1623 SPD cxxxvii. 9–10
} Struggle for monopoly and to exclude aliens.
Charles I:
1628 SPD cxi. 33
1630 Remem. p. 123
Charles II:
1661 SPD xxx. 41. Additions to charter.
[Cf. Commons' Journals, viii. 131; x. 280; xi. 44–5, 96, 392–4; and for logwood patent cf. SPD James I, cxii. 109; cxvi. 47; cxxii. 96; cxxix. 67; cxxxi. 65.]

Farriers' Company.

1617 SPD xli. 56. Accounts; joint-stock; clerk.
1679 Mar. 5, SPD, Entry Book, vol. xxxvi. f. 175. Heads of charter.

Feltmakers' Company. For previous documents see *Haberdashers.*

James I:
1604 July 29, SPD viii. 138. Grant of charter.
1605 City Rep. vol. xxvii. f. 72
1607 SPD xxxix. 34
1610 City Rep. vol. xxix. f. 266
1611–2 „ „ xxx. ff. 97, 101, 245, 375
} City refuses to admit.
„ Cotton MSS. BM Titus Bv 115–18. Joint-stock project.
1612 Remem. p. 95.
1613 Dec. 2, SPD, Proc. Coll. No. 26. Proclamation against imports.
1613 City Rep. vol. xxxi. f. 45.
1614 „ „ xxxii. f. 19.
„ PCR Mar. 16.
1617 SPD xciv. 116. Supply of materials.
1618 City Rep. vol. xxxiii. ff. 343, 354
„ PCR May 25
1619 PCR July 25
„ City Rep. vol. xxxiv. ff. 36, 324
1622 „ „ xxxvi. f. 233
„ Aug. 24, SPD p. 442 (vol. 1619–23)
} Feltmakers' struggle for recognition by City.
1623 SPD clii. 54, and Proc. Coll. No. 117. Proclamation against imports.
1624 May 20, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iii. 33; cf. Commons' Journals, i, Apr. 14; May 12, 19.

Charles I:
1631 SPD cxcvii. 16.
1632 PCR Feb. 28.
„ City Rep. vol. xlvi. ff. 401, 405, 438.
1634 SPD cclxix. 39.
1636 Book of Petitions, Chas. I, cccxxiii. p. 50.
1637 SPD ccclxvi. 68.
1638 City Rep. vol. liii. f. 60
„ SPD ccclxxxii. 53, in Rymer, Foedera, May 26, O. xx. 230
„ May 1 SPD p. 392
„ PCR Dec. 19
„ SPD cccxci. 25
1639 PCR Feb. 22
„ SPD ccccix. 126, 196
„ SPD ccccx. 142, 144, 145
„ Feb. 1, Book of Petitions, Chas. I, cccciii. 26, 92
„ SPD ccccxvii. 2, ccccxviii. 72
„ SPD ccccxxii. 5; ccccxxviii. 2, 43, 77
„ Carew Transcripts at Record Office, f. 52
1640 SPD ccccxli. 25; ccccxliii. 85
„ PCR Jan. 17, 24, 31
„ Nov. 25, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 29
1643 „ „ v. 119
} Beavermakers *v.* Feltmakers.
} Refractory members.

[Commons' Journals, Aug. 7, 1644; July 2, Sept. 5, 1649; Oct. 23, 1650.]

1650 City Rep. vol. lxi. ff. 16, 193
1658 „ „ lxvi. f. 117
1663 „ „ lxix. f. 210
} Feltmakers admitted by City.

1665 SPD cxxii. 107
1666 PCR Apr. 27. 1667 PCR Apr. 26
} Skinners *v.* Feltmakers.

1667 June 27. Feltmakers' charter.
„ Oct. 8
1668 July 7
} Extracts from City Rep. in Feltmakers' Book. See pp. 245–6.

1676–81
1691 to present
} Feltmakers' Court Book. See pp. 247–52.

Framework Knitters' Company.

1661 SPD xxxii. 156, charter.

Glaziers' Company.

1620 SPD cxiii. 47–53
1621 SPD cxx. 71, 89
} Supply of materials.

1625 Mar. 9, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 6. Division amongst members.
1637 May 5, SPD p. 68. Petition for incorporation.

Glovers' Company.

1593 Harleian MSS. BM 6850.
James I:
Lansdowne MSS. BM lxxiii. 17; lxxiv. 40–62, *re* Mr. Darcy's patent.
1619 Add. MSS. BM 12504, ff. 102–16. Petition for incorporation.
1620–1 Mar. 12, Lords' Calendar, HMCR. Draft Act for incorporation.
1622 SPD cxxvii. 20–1. Against aliens.
Charles I:
1636 SPD vol. 1635–6, p. 552
1637 SPD cccl xxvii. 38
1638 SPD cccl xxxvi. 90
1638? SPD cccc vii. 95
„ Apr. 29, PCR
} Incorporation opposed by Leathersellers.

Gold and Silver Wiredrawers.

James I:
1611–21 Lords' Calendar, HMCR iii. 13–26
1619 SPD cx. 127
1620 SPD cxiii. 61; cxviii. 98, 99, 128
„ SPD cxix. 123
1622 SPD cxxx. 33; cxxxii. 17
„ SPD Sep. 23, p. 448
1623 SPD cxxxviii. 111
[Cf. Commons' Journals, i. 726]
} Mompesson's monopoly.

Goldsmiths' Company.

James I:
1616 Remem. p. 219. Against gold thread monopoly.
1620 SPD cxiii. 119. Commonalty *v.* Assistants.
1621 SPD cxxvii. 12. Against aliens.
Charles I:
1627 Remem. p. 226.
1635 „ p. 111.

Gutstring-makers.

1637 SPD ccclxxii. 80. Petition for incorporation.

Haberdashers' Company.

1510 Nov. 12 Brewer's *Letters and Papers of Hen. VIII*, p. 195, No. 1317
1513 Mar. 11–13 Brewer's *Letters and Papers of Hen. VIII*, Nos. 3784, 3794
1514 June 1, July 8 Brewer's *Letters and Papers of Hen. VIII*, Nos. 5144, 5239
} Control of hat and cap trade.

1576 Lansdowne MSS. BM xxiv. 7. Feltmakers' petition for separation.
1577 Lansdowne MSS. BM xxviii. 29. Star Chamber decree.
1577–8 City Rep. vol. xix. ff. 284, 474
1579–80 Lansdowne MSS. BM xxviii. 28, 30, 31
" " " " xxix. 23–7
" City Rep. vol. xx. f. 38
} Feltmakers and Haberdashers.

1583 Lansdowne MSS. xxxviii. 4. Against country feltmakers.
1584–1604 *Haberdashers' Court Book*, see above, pp. 134–5.
1591 City Rep. vol. xxii. ff. 251, 267.
See also under *Feltmakers* and *Pinmakers.*

Horners' Company.

1593 Lansdowne MSS. BM lxxiii. 15.
1597 " " " lxxxvi. 12.
1600 City Rep. vol. xxiv. ff. 140, 290, 297. Ordinances.
1668 SPD Proc. Coll. Chas. II, No. 264. Against export of horn.

Hour-glass makers.

James I:
1620 SPD cxiii. 20
Charles I:
1637 SPD ccclxxiii. 82
1638 SPD ccclxxviii.
} Against glass monopoly.

Joiners' Company.

James I:
1613 Remem. p. 96. Search over other trades.
1615 " p. 98. Masterpiece.
1622 SPD cxxviii. 60. Aliens.

Leathersellers' Company.

Elizabeth:
1592 City Rep. vol. xxii. ff. 353, 364–7, 399–401. City searchers.
1593 Lansdowne MSS. BM lxxiii. 17; lxxiv. 40–62
" Harleian MSS. BM 6842, 71
1593–5 Remem. pp. 179–82
1594 City Rep. vol. xxiii. ff. 296, 346–9, 471
} Opposition to Darcy's patent for searching leather.

James I:
1608 SPD xxxi.
1622 Aug. 1, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iii. 27. See also *Glovers.*

Needlemakers' Company.

1629 Remem. pp. 104, 105. An engine prohibited.

1662 SPD lvii. 1
1663 Nov. 17, SPD p. 343 } Grant of charter.
1664 Jan. 21, ,, p. 449
1669 Apr. 5, Proc. Coll. p. 268. Import forbidden.

Painters' Company.

1575 Lansdowne MSS. BM vol. xx. No. 9.
1576 ,, ,, ,, ,, xxii. Nos. 47–53.
1578 SPD cxxv. 28. Painters *v.* Heralds.
1598 City Rep. vol. xxiv. f. 245 } Painters *v.* Plaisterers.
1601 Dec. 12, House of Lords MSS. HMCR iii. 10 }
1619 SPD cv. 80.
1675 Harleian MSS. BM 1099. Co-operation.

Pattenmakers' Company.

1669 SPD Charles II, cclx. 70 } Incorporation.
1670 SPD p. 189; Doquet, vol. xxiv. 170 }

Pewterers' Company.

Elizabeth:
1559 SPD ix. 36. Charter.
1593 Salisbury MSS. Pt. iv. 463 (HMCR)
,, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 9
1595 SPD cclii. 76–7
1597 Salisbury MSS. Pt. vii. 136 (HMCR)
,, Lansdowne MSS. BM lxxxvi. 67 and 71
James I:
1603 SPD ii. 45
1604 SPD Sept. 25, p. 152; Remem. p. 93
1606 SPD xxiii. 56
1610 SPD liv. 25
1615 SPD Jan. 19, p. 270; Grant Book, p. 135
1621 May 14, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 121 } Tin monopoly.
1622 SPD cxxviii. 111. Hammermen *v.* Pewterers.
Charles I:
1629–35 Remem. pp. 107–11
1636 SPD cccxxvi. 8
1639 SPD ccccix. 15; ccccxx. 38
,, Collection of Proclamations, Charles I, 222
,, Book of Petitions, ccciii. 100 } Tin monopoly.
,, PCR Jan. 1, July 4, July 17 } Workmen again
1641 May 28, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 69 } complain.

Pinmakers' Company.

1464–96 Egerton MSS. BM 1142.
Account books of Pinmakers and request for amalgamation with Wiremongers.
1567 SPD Eliz. xliii. 31
1571 ,, ,, xix. 63
1587 ,, ,, cc. 53
1591 ,, ,, ccxxxix. 18 } *Re* importation of pins.
1592 Salisbury MSS. Pt. iv. 276 (HMCR)
1597 ,, ,, vii. p. 545
1598 Jan. 16, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 116 }
1605 Apr. 16, SPD p. 211. Incorporation.
1607 SPD xxvi. 100
,, Remem. p. 519
1607–9 Lansdowne MSS. BM clii. 62 } Pinmakers *v.* Haberdashers.
,, Harleian ,, ,, 6842, 69
,, Cotton ,, ,, Titus Bv 105

1614 Remem. p. 77; SPD lxxviii.
1615–18 Remem. pp. 522–5
1616 SPD lxxxvi. 146
„ PCR Apr. 21, June 16, Nov. 20
1618 PCR Oct. 23
1619 „ „ SPD Jas. I, cx. 132
1620 PCR Mar. 21
} Sir T. Bartlett's monopoly.

Charles I:
1632 SPD ccxxix. 55.
1635 SPD cccii. 122.
1637 SPD ccclxv. 33; ccclxxxvii. 58.
1638 SPD cccxcvii. 20; cccc. 86–7.
„ SPD ccccvii. 100.
1639 Mar. 4, SPD pp. 531–2; ccccxxxvi. 1; ccccxxxviii. 51.
„ PCR June 16, Sept. 15.
1640 PCR Mar. 18, see pp. 236–40.
„ Nov. 25, Lords' Calendar, HMCR iv. 29.
1652 SPD xxv. 76.

Charles II:
1663 SPD lxxix. 120.
1664 SPD xci. 95; xciii. 60–1.
„ Jan. 28, House of Lords MSS. HMCR vii. 179.
1665 PCR May 19, June 2.
1675 Morrison MSS. HMCR ix. 450.
1690 House of Lords MSS. Oct. 10 (289), p. 111.
[Cf. Case of Corporation of Pinmakers, BM 816 m. 13, 89. Pinmakers' Case in opposition to Mr. Killigrew's Bill, BM.]

Plaisterers' Company.

1582 Remem. p. 153.
1597 SPD cclxii. 30.
„ City Rep. vol. xxiv. f. 67.
1601 See *Painters* and Lansdowne MSS. cvi. 57–9.
1613 June 1, SPD p. 186
„ „ SPD lxxiv. 51; lxxxv. 77
} Plaisterers *v.* Bricklayers.
1637 SPD ccclxvii. 88. Freemasons *v.* Plaisterers.
1664 Commons' Journals, viii. 553. Plaisterers *v.* Paperstainers.

Playing Card-makers' Company.

Charles I:
1629 SPD clv. 62.
1631 SPD clxxxv. 18; PCR f. 40.
1640 SPD cccclxxvii. 64.

Plumbers' Company.

James I:
1611 SPD lxii. 56. Charter.
1618–19 Remem. pp. 220–3
1619 SPD cix. 164; cx. 63
„ SPD cxi. 36, 73
1620 SPD cxv. 59; cxvi. 104
} Capt. Bell's patent for search of lead.
1632 PCR Mar. 15. Bad lead.

Shipwrights' Companies.

James I:
1605 Apr. 16, SPD p. 211. Charter to shipwrights of England.

1613 SPD lxxiv. 28, 92. Refractory members.

Charles I:

1628 SPD xciv. 91.
„ SPD cxix. 31. Number employed.
„ SPD cxxvi. 26. Demands of calkers.
1633 SPD ccxxxix } Materials.
1634 SPD cccxiii. 18 }
1635 SPD cclxiv. 134.
„ SPD ccxciii. 55–6; cciv. 18. Building for foreign states.
1636 ccvii. 90–1, cccxi. 52; cccxvi. 70; cccxvii. 64 } London Shipwrights *v.* Rotherhithe Shipwrights.
„ SPD cccxviii. 1, 30
„ SPD cccxx. 14; cccxxi. 52
„ SPD cccxxvii. 37
1637 SPD ccclxiii. 72; ccclxiv. 60
1638 SPD ccclxxix. 27, c } Calkers *v.* Shipwrights.
„ SPD cccliii. 87–92
„ Feb. 19 SPD p. 268
[1704 Commons' Journals, xiv. 482. Corporation desired by working shipwrights.]

Silkmen's Company.

1611 Remem. pp. 94–5. Petition for charter.

Charles I:

1633 PCR Jan. 27. Charter.
1634 SPD cclxxviii. 39. Refractory members.
1635 SPD cccix. 27. Lawsuit *re* silk dyeing.
1636 SPD cccxli. 111.
1637 SPD ccclxii. 104. Refractory members.

Charles II:

1667 PCR Sept. 25, Oct. 4, 16, 23; of 14 Charles II, c. 15 and 19 and 20 Charles II, c. 11.

Skinners' Company.

1564 City Rep. vol. xv. fol. 432. Amalgamation of Tawyers and Skinners.
1591 Salisbury MSS. Pt. iv. 91, 94 (HMCR)
1592 Lansdowne MSS. BM lxxi. 54; lxxiii. 16
1594 City Rep. vol. xxiii. f. 251

James I:

1606 Remem. p. 93; City Rep. vol. xxvii. ff. 176, 321, 351, and vol. xxviii. f. 26
[Cf. Livery Companies Comm. Rept. i. 388, and Statutes, 3 Jac. I, c. 9]
„ Cotton MSS. BM Titus Bv ff. 66, 19
1616 SPD lxxxvi. 77
„ PCR Nov. 23
1617 PCR Jan. Feb. 26
1618 SPD xcvii. 102
1636 SPD cccxxix. 30
1639 PCR Jan. 23

Artisan Skinners *v.* Merchants.

Charles II:

1665 SPD cxxii. 107; cxxv. 16 } Skinners *v.* Feltmakers.
1666 SPD ccx. 125 }

Stationers' Company.

See documents inserted in Arber's *Transcript.*

Tilers and Brickmakers' Company (of Westminster).

James I:
1620 SPD cxii. 80.
Charles I:
1636 SPD cccxv. 141.
1637 SPD ccclxii. 81; ccclxxii. 58–9.
1638 SPD ccclxxxviii. 65; cccxcix. 43.
1639 SPD ccccxvii. 66; ccccxviii. 25.

Tobacco-pipe makers.

James I:
1619 SPD cix. 160
1620 SPD xcv. 53; cxv. 104; cxvi. 83
Charles I:
1627 SPD lxxxix. 12
1638 PCR Aug. 19
} First charter.

Charles II:
1662 SPD lii. 32; lx. 9; lxi. 12
1663 SPD lxxii. 70
1664 SPD xcvii. 65
} Second charter.

Weavers' Company (for earlier references see Ashley, Econ. Hist. Pt. I, 86, and Pt. II, 193–201. Also above, pp. 28–30).

Henry VIII:
1529 Star Chamber case printed in Cunningham, i, 620
Elizabeth:
1583 Lansdowne MSS. BM 38, 16
} Weavers' exclusive right to their craft.

1590 City Rep. vol. xxii. ff. 196, 202. Yeomanry's complaint.
1595 „ „ xxiii. ff. 350, 373, 406. Weavers' variance with Bailiff.
1596 City Rep. vol. xxiii. f. 513. Ordinances, number of apprentices, &c.

James I:
1611 Remem. p. 95. Relations to Silkmen.
1612–14 „ p. 521.
1615 SPD lxxxi. 9–56. Against aliens.
1619 SPD cix. 64, 65. Company's estates.
1622 SPD cxxxi. 76; cxxxii. 75; cxxxiii. 63
„ Remem. p. 103
} Weavers' exclusive rights.

Charles I:
1630 SPD clxxx. 70; PCR Sept. 15
1633 SPD cclvii. 15
} Dyeing silks, &c.

1638 SPD May 25, p. 454
„ SPD cccxciii. 48, 56–7, 79–80
„ SPD cccciv. 49; ccccvii. 79
1639 SPD ccccix. 39, 202–3; ccccxx. 69
„ SPD ccccxxi. 1; ccccxxvii. 89
„ SPD ccccxxi. 1; ccccxxix. 2
1640 SPD cccclvi. 4, and Book of Petitions, cccciii. p. 220
} New charter with wider powers throughout England.

Charles II:
1660 SPD xxiv. 108. Against importation.
1675 Ingelby MSS. in HMCR pp. 372–6. Weavers' riots.
1704 Harleian MSS. BM 2262–3. Government of Company.

APPENDIX C

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